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For the Christian Spectator.

Swedenborgianism.

MR. EDITOR,

As there are now at least a dozen societies of Swedenborgians in our country, and as great exertions are making to propagate their tenets, I have thought it desirable that the public should have a clear view of this system of religion, before they are called upon to embrace it. This system occupies no middle ground. If it be from heaven, it is of the utmost importance that it be spread; if it be the work of man, it ought to be discouraged. That a person of talents may now and then profess to believe it, is no argument in its favor. Every system of religion has been upheld more or less by talents. How men of learning and sound judgment in other respects, can pretend to believe in the greatest absurdities that were ever invented, I pretend not to explain. That no system is so absurd as to want followers, is a fact, which I leave to be accounted for by others. So long as "the heart governs the understanding," talents and learning are no shield against error. Great and powerful minds, like the most hardened and polished steel, are liable to be sullied and tarnished. I propose to give your readers as clear and candid a view of this "new dispensation," as can be drawn from the works of its founder, pledging myself to assert nothing for which I cannot show authority.*

The principal authorities consulted

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Emmanuel Swedenborg whose writings I am now to examine, was born at Stockholm in 1689. We know little respecting his childhood and youth, except that he appears to have been well educated by his father who was a bishop in the Lutheran church of Westrogothia. At the age of 21, he travelled over the greater part of the continent of Europe, at which time he seems to have faithfully studied human nature. At twenty seven, he was appointed Assessor of a Metallic college by Charles XII, king of Sweden, and received the title of Baron three years after. In his forty fifth year he published his *Regnum Minerae*, in three folio volumes, and soon after, treatises on Tides and Planets. He was a man of great learning for his day, and possessed natural talents of the highest order. Before publishing his system of religion, he was extensively known in Europe, and had gained an enviable reputation. He possessed a vigorous mind, a bold and daring imagination, was impetuous and headstrong in his feelings, ardent in his pursuits, and probably honest in his professions. His diligence was astonishing. Besides many works connected with the sciences, he has left more than 30 octavo volumes, besides many of a smaller size, all of which are filled with revelations or explanations of

on this subject, are Arcana Cœlestia, 12 vols.—True christian religion, 2 vols.—Heaven and Hell—Hindmarsh—North Amer. Rev.—Remarks upon the writings of Swedenborg—Buck—New Jerusalem Miss. &c.

that system of religion, of which he was the founder. All these were written after he was 54 years of age. To the contents of these works, the reader is soon to be introduced. Swedenborg died at London in 1772, aged 84. During his life his followers were very few. His works were published at his own expense, and little noticed. It is here to be observed, that both he and his followers claim that all his writings are "inspired by God;" that "he is the new star in the Northern hemisphere, to guide and comfort the bewildered traveller on his way to Bethlehem;" and that his "New dispensation is the last and most magnificent of all."

Before attempting to analyze the system of Swedenborg, I shall permit him to give his own account of his first vision, which took place in 1743. "I dined very late at my lodgings at London, and ate with great appetite, till at the close of my repast, I perceived a kind of mist about my eyes, and the floor of my chamber was covered with hideous reptiles. They soon disappeared, and the darkness was dissipated, and I saw clearly in the midst of a brilliant light, a man seated in the corner of the chamber who said to me in a terrible voice, *eat not so much*. At those words my sight became obscured; afterwards it became clear by degrees, and I found myself alone. The night following, the same man, radiant with light, appeared to me and said, "I am God, the Lord, creator and redeemer; I have chosen you to unfold to men the internal and spiritual sense of the sacred writings, and will dictate to you what you are to write." At that time I was not terrified, and the light, though very brilliant, made no unpleasant impression upon my eyes. The Lord was clothed with purple, and the vision lasted a quarter of an hour. That same night the eyes of my internal man were opened, and fitted to see things in the world of spirits, and in hell, in which places I found many persons of mine acquaintance, some

of them long since, and others lately deceased."

From the time that he thus saw the personal appearance of God, to the day of his death, Swedenborg enjoyed uninterrupted intercourse with the world of spirits. He informs us that he conversed with angels on many subjects "at least a thousand times." He relates the most ludicrous ideas and stories with such a wonderful degree of gravity, that the reader of his works often finds it difficult to keep his risible muscles under proper discipline. I am first to give a faint picture of heaven and hell as drawn by our author in a large volume, and of which he most solemnly assures us on his dying bed "every word is true."

At death, then, the soul does not immediately go either to heaven or hell as the scriptures teach us, but to a world of spirits situated exactly between. This "valley of spirits," has heaven above it, and hell beneath it; but it is so well guarded by rocks, mountains, &c. that the spirits cannot escape. They remain here, some for days, some for weeks, or even for years, though none are allowed to remain longer than thirty years. Whether this valley becomes full, or why they are not permitted to remain longer, we are not informed.

From this world of spirits, the soul if prepared, is introduced into heaven. Here we find every thing almost precisely as it is on earth. There are three distinct heavens, the inhabitants of which are not permitted to hold any communion with each other, though Swedenborg was allowed even this privilege. The angels are divided into innumerable societies, and seem to continue in their respective places, with little or slow improvement. "That the universal heaven resembles the human form, is a secret hitherto unknown in this world;" but it is even so, though we can get no idea of the proposition. "That angels are human forms of men," says Swedenborg, "I have seen a thousand times, and have conversed with them, as

one man with another—nor did I ever see any thing that differed from the human form." He informs us that there is a real sun and moon in heaven, though they are both spiritual. This idea is highly poetical, but not original: the heathen poet expresses it more clear and elegant;

—“solemque suum, et sua sidera nōrunt.” There is also heat, light, and darkness, in heaven; and one is almost tempted to set Milton down as a Swedenborgian, notwithstanding he lived some time before Swedenborg.

‘There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by the
throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual
round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which wakes
thro’ heaven
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night.’

There are four cardinal points in heaven, corresponding to ours; and what is remarkable, the angels are never permitted to turn their faces from the east. How they are comfortable or happy in this eternal position, it is difficult to conceive. The angels are clad in real garments, which our author saw and handled times without number. They have houses, gardens, walks, groves &c. like ourselves. They have temples and social worship, though to what denomination they belong we are not told. Swedenborg frequently attended their meetings and even assisted in conducting them. “That I might be an eye witness to the manner of their assemblies in their temples, I have been indulged with permission to enter them, and hear the preachings. The preacher stands in a pulpit on the east side; before him sit those who are most eminent for wisdom, and on either hand the interior. They sit in something of a circular form, so that all can see the face of the preacher; but no one is to be out of his sight, no one is allowed to stand behind the pulpit; for should one do so, it would confuse the preacher, as would be the case should any one

dissent from his doctrine.” The power of angels is described as very great over matter. “I have seen mountains that had been occupied by evil spirits, cast down and overturned, or shaken from top to bottom as by an earthquake; rocks also rent assunder to their very foundations, and the evil spirits upon them, swallowed up.” The angels all speak one language, which, as our author so readily understood it, is probably Swedish. Writings are numerous among the angels, though they seem to be applied to no use. These are probably Hebrew. “On a certain time a little paper was sent me from heaven, on which were written some words in Hebrew characters, and it was told me that every letter contained some secrets of wisdom, nay the very flexures and curvatures of the letters, and the sounding them from thence.” To many it may be new to learn, that there never was such a being as satan or the devil; that there never was any order of spirits superior to man;—and that every inhabitant of heaven and hell originally came from this world; but Swedenborg says it is so. It may also be new, to learn that there is never to be any resurrection, except what takes place at death, when a spiritual body is taken out of our natural bodies; that there is never to be a day of judgment, except what took place in 1757, which was the second and last judgment,” but Swedenborg says these truths were all thus revealed to him. Just one third part of the inhabitants of heaven are infants, who are educated with great care by females appointed for that purpose. The rich and poor retain their respective characters in the other world. The lot of the rich, when transplanted to heaven, is that of being in a condition of greater splendor than others: some of them dwell in stately palaces, richly furnished and ornamented as with gold and silver, together with abundance of all things ministering to the delight of life.” Our Saviour declares that there is

"neither marriage nor giving in marriage" in heaven; but Swedenborg in a long and dismal chapter on this subject, says there *are* marriages in heaven.

The description which he gives of hell resembles that of heaven. He says there are three hells, corresponding to the three heavens; that there are the same number of societies; that there is an exact equilibrium between heaven and hell, to prevent the freedom of man from being destroyed by the overbalancing of good or evil; that all the inhabitants of hell are of one race; and that as all heaven resembled one man, so all hell resembles one devil. These three hells are described as under huge mountains, hills and rocks; as dark and dismal, though here and there lighted up with burning coals. Some of the dwellings of the sufferers, are described as resembling dens of wild beasts, some as full of fire, some as ruined cottages, towns and streets; others are like deserts, caves and gloomy woods. The punishment of hell is very properly represented to consist in unrestrained passions. But in this, we find the inhabitants represented as suffering from heat, cold, hunger; as being beaten, driven into narrow and filthy places &c. in a manner that almost wholly destroys that awe and dread with which this subject is surrounded by the language of the New Testament.

The doctrine of *correspondencies* is one which makes a conspicuous figure in the writings of Swedenborg and his disciples. If we, who are not initiated into all his mysteries, can understand it by diligently reading his ponderous volumes, it amounts to this; every thing on earth, even beasts, birds, fishes, rocks, herbs, and in short, every thing in the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdom, has an exact correspondent or resemblance in the spiritual worlds. Hence the form of a deity is that of a man. He informs us that this doctrine was well understood by the ancients; that it is the foundation on which all the Egyptian hieroglyphics

are built; that it has been lost since the time of Job, who last used it, till it was again revealed to this same Emmanuel Swedenborg. Lest there be a possibility of mistake, I quote his own definition of correspondencies. "Omnia quæ in cœlis, sunt in terris terrestri modo: omnia quæ in terris, sunt in cœlis cœlesti modo."

But the principal use of this important doctrine is to explain the scriptures. The bible, according to Swedenborg, has three senses, the celestial, the spiritual and the natural. He finds a world of meaning in every word, and even every letter of the Old and New Testament; and by the aid of this science he cuts every knot, solves every difficulty, and makes "any thing mean any thing." Without this science we are wholly in the dark, and understand the bible no better than infants. If the reader be surprised that the christian church has been so many centuries in the dark, Swedenborg informs us that it is owing to their great simplicity. "The reason why the science of correspondencies, which is the true key to the spiritual sense of the word, was not discovered to later ages, [ages since the time of Job] was because the christians of the primitive church, were men of such great *simplicity*, that it was to no purpose to discover it to them: for had it been discovered, they would have found no use in it, nor would they have understood it." Let us now look at an example or two, which are explained by the doctrine of correspondencies. The book of Genesis is not a historical account of the creation, for we have "nothing to do with the creation." Every verse and *word* contains a *divine allegory* full of *spiritual meaning*, which relates to subjects altogether different from those embraced in the letter. The 1st chapter of Genesis, in its *internal sense*, describes the process of *regeneration in seven successive states*;—by Adam and Eve are signified the *most ancient church &c.*

Matt. xxiv 29—31. "Immediately after the tribulation of those

days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven ; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they shall gather" &c. Now to apply this wonderful 'key of the New Jerusalem Church'. "The *sun* here signifies the Lord, in reference to love : the *moon* signifies the Lord in reference to faith : the *stars* signify knowledge of good things and true ; the *tribes* signify all truths and things in their complex ; the *coming of the Lord*, signifies his presence in the word, and *revelation of it*" to Swedenborg ; "the *clouds* signify the written word in its external sense ; the *glory* signifies divine truth as it is the internal sense ; the *trumpet* signifies divine truth as revealed from heaven" by Swedenborg &c.

Again; according to this "new star" the word "*horse* invariably signifies the understanding, and chariot means *doctrine*." This is certainly new, and leaves us in astonishment at the cold depravity of Moses and the Israelites, who could sing a triumphant song after seeing such a quantity of "understanding and doctrine" drowned in the Red sea. Besides the word "chariot" in some versions is always rendered by the word *wagon*, but as "chariot" only signifies "doctrine," how would this key work, when waggons supply the place of chariots.

I must ask the indulgence of the reader while I adduce a few more examples of the wonderful revelations which Swedenborg has left us in his "universal theology." I mention them that the reader may know what he is to believe when he embraces this system, and as reasons why severity has, or will be used. This book was written when our author was 82 years of age; but as it

is "all inspired," and the last of his works, it must be regarded as the most important of all his revelations. Like the newest voyages and travels, it contains all the last discoveries and corrections of former works of the kind. It is indeed, the text book from which his disciples principally draw their belief. The first example cannot be abridged with advantage.

"In consequence of what I have seen and been an eye witness of, for years together, I can assert the following facts relating to the spiritual world ; that there are earths in that world, just as in the natural world ; and that there are also plains and valleys, mountains and hills, fountains and rivers ; that there are parades, gardens, groves, and woods ; that there are cities with palaces and houses ; also that there are writings and books, employments and merchandizes, and that there are gold and silver, and precious stones ; in a word, that there is in the spiritual world, all and every thing that is in the natural world."

In the course of the frequent and constant visits which Swedenborg made to the spiritual world, he had repeated interviews with all those who have ever taken a very distinguished part in religion. He mentions the names, characters, and employments of several. They all retain their respective tenets, and all have their particular followers. He occupies about forty pages in giving these *memorabilia*. If the reader of these pages be indifferent to religion, he will probably smile at extravagances so wild. If he be a christian, his heart cannot but ache, that pretended revelations so improbable, so unworthy of heaven, so contemptibly absurd, should be believed. If he believe Swedenborg to have been a wilful impostor, he cannot but burn with one intense glow of indignation. If he believe him to be self deceived and a fanatic, he must sigh over a delusion so ridiculous. I give an example.

Among others whom he repeated-

ly saw, was *John Calvin*. Of the condition of Calvin in the future world, we have the following picture: that at his death, it was sometime before the angels could convince him that he had actually exchanged worlds; that his followers were all confined in dungeons and caves, because they believed the doctrine of predestination; that he himself was miserably lonesome, having none with whom he could associate; that for a long time he hid himself in a dark corner; that he next lodged at the house of harlots; and finally, Swedenborg left him shut up in a cave with his followers, where they laboured for their food, and made it their business and delight to quarrel and do each other mischief!

It appears according to this new dispensation, that every nation has its particular place assigned it in the world of spirits. Thus the English have two large cities, both of which are named London. "There are two large cities into which most of the English enter after death. I was permitted to see one of them, and to walk through it. The middle answers to that part of London where merchants meet, called the exchange, and therethe moderators dwell." "The other great city, called also London, is not in the middle part of the christian region, but is separated from it towards the north, and is the receptacle of the dead who are inwardly wicked. In the midst of it there is an open communication with hell, into which the inhabitants sink down and are swallowed up in their turns."

We cannot complain of the system of Swedenborg, that in all cases it is wanting in charity. He assures us that the heathen are as fair candidates for heaven as christians: and from what he says we are led to infer that they are actually much the most numerous class. After giving a ludicrous account of an insurrection among the Mahomedans in the spiritual world, he places the greater part of them in heaven; though on account of their proneness to quarrel with christians, they have two separate heavens

by themselves. The Jews are mostly engaged in traffic, live in houses and streets intolerably filthy, and are mostly wretched. Moses stands among them with his rod, and commands them to believe on the Messiah who has already come.

As our author has repeatedly visited the planets in our system, it is not a little disappointing and mortifying not to have any more definite information respecting them than our own weak eyes can give, even at this distance. He not only gives us no data by which we may gratify our curiosity, but does not even console us with the assurance that he has left guide boards on the road, to direct future travellers.

Those who have been troubled with a disease known by the name of *dyspepsia*, may be surprized to learn from this "inspired man" by a special revelation, that they have been wholly ignorant of its cause. "It has been given me to know whence anxiety, grief, and that sadness of mind which we call melancholy in man, proceed. There are certain spirits, that are not joined to Hell, as being newly departed from the body, which delight in things undigested, such as meat corrupted in the stomach, and hold their confabulations in such sinks of uncleanness in man, as are suitable to their impure affections. These spirits appear near the stomach, some to the right and some to the left of it, some higher, some lower, some nearer, some more distant, according to their different kinds of affection; and that they cause uneasiness of mind, I am fuliy convinced by experience. I have seen and heard them, and felt the uneasiness caused by them, and I have also conversed with them!"

I might proceed to select revelations similar to these, till I had filled as many volumes as there are of the works from which I selected: for every work of Swedenborg which I have examined, is equally marvellous, equally wild and foolish. But it will be expected that I give at one view, a brief summary of his creed.

This, it must be confessed, is no easy task ; for these writings are so voluminous, so obscure, so unintelligible, so filled with chaos and fable, and so frequently contradictory, that it is next to impossible, to reduce the system to a tangible shape. Yet this will now be attempted.

The Swedenborgians then, believe *negatively*, that there will be no future day of Judgment : they do not believe in the second coming of Christ and the consequent destruction of the visible heavens and earth ; they do not believe in a future resurrection ; they do not believe in the atonement or vicarious sacrifice ; they do not believe in the personality of the trinity, though they admit that there are three divine essences ; they do not believe in predestination ; they deny the doctrine of election, of justification by faith &c. *Positively*, they believe that all the writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg are divinely inspired; that he talked with God face to face : that the final judgment of the world, took place in 1757 ; that the second coming of Christ took place in the revelation by Swedenborg ; that there is a world of spirits or purgatory between heaven and hell ; that there are three distinct heavens, and three hells, both of which exactly balance each other, and are equal as to the number of inhabitants ; that the scriptures can be understood only by those who can explain them in three different senses ; that every thing in this world has its correspondent in the world of spirits ; that the dispensation of the New Jerusalem Church is the crown of all others &c. The followers of this system have public worship, churches, a Liturgy and music.

Such is the creed of the Swedenborgians, and such is the system for the propagation of which no small exertions are now making. Such too, are the high pretensions which are claimed by the founder of this sect. Let us now see by what arguments or evidence, the inspiration of this mass of absurdities demands our belief. The inspiration of

Moses, the Jewish ceremonies and laws, and the religion of Christ and his Apostles, were proved by most stupendous miracles. We know that as it regards the Gospel great stress may be placed upon its internal evidence ; this argument to the bosom of the christian must ever be strong and consoling. But it is not too much to say, that we have no reason to suppose that even christianity would have been received by mankind, without the testimony of miracles. Whatever stress then, may be laid on internal evidence for the inspiration of any system of religion, the ultimate test must be miracles. Now Swedenborg never pretended to perform any miracles in proof of his inspiration. For this, he assigns two reasons, viz. that miracles would destroy the freedom of the will, and make men believe whether they would or not, and that his doctrines are sufficiently convincing without the aid of miracles. He might have added a third reason of still greater weight. He thus states his reasons in his *Arcana Cœlestia*. In respect to prodigies and signs, it is to be observed, that they were performed amongst such persons as were in external worship, and were not desirous of knowing any thing about internal worship ; for they who were in such worship, were to be compelled by external means ; hence it was, that miracles were performed among the Jewish and Israelitish people, who were merely in external worship, and none that was spiritual. Hence it was that so many miracles were performed among that nation. But with those who are in internal worship, that is, in charity and faith, miracles are not performed, being to such persons hurtful : for miracles force or compel to believe, and whatsoever is of compulsion doth not remain, but is dissipated--hence it is that no miracles are performed at this day. That they are also of a hurtful nature, may appear from the following considerations : they compel to believe, and fix in the external man an idea that the thing is so or

so: if the internal man afterwards denies what the miracles have confirmed, then there commences an opposition and collision between the internal and external man, and at length, when the ideas produced from miracles are dissipated, the conjunction of falsehood and truth takes place, which is profanation. Hence it is evident how dangerous and hurtful miracles would be at this day in the church." "Are not the things above mentioned above miracles!"

The following passage is from Hindmarsh, in his defence of Swedenborgianism. He is a zealous disciple, and seems to have had as clear views as can be possessed on a subject so dark. "As former dispensations required the aid and assistance of miracles, in order to induce mankind to acknowledge them, this argues at least, that they did not carry with them that clear and rational evidence of their truth, which was of itself sufficient to gain credit among men; for wherever the truth of a thing cannot be established by any other means than by miracles, it plainly implies that it is involved in obscurity, doubt, and uncertainty. Such was the case with all former dispensations, which only *shadowed forth* and *represented* the last and most magnificent of all, the *New Jererusalem*. This last and greatest of dispensations requires no miracles, because the truths it displays are of themselves *clear, rational, and satisfactory*. It is too *dignified* to stoop down to earth for any thing that resembles a miracle; for by so doing, its heaven-born glory would be tarnished, and a cloud would overspread the sky, so as to interrupt the beams of celestial light, proceeding from him, who is the sun of righteousness!"

Rejecting the aid of miracles, because out of his power, Swedenborg relies wholly upon internal evidence for the credit of his revelations. Did I not presume that I have already given the reader a sufficiently enlarged selection of this kind of testimony, it might be indefinitely increased. But

there is one proof of the doctrine of Swedenborgianism, which may be brought forward by the disciples of this religion, if it be really true. We have not as yet seen a shadow of evidence in its favor. If it really be what it pretends to be, we have a right to expect and demand the proof now to be mentioned. It is this. The same revelation which declared to Swedenborg that his doctrines possessed a "superiority in excellence and dignity above all the knowledges that have heretofore been published in the world," also revealed to him that in the interior of Africa, far from the sea-shore, his system of religion had been revealed, and was rapidly spread through all the region; consequently, that there is a large country, in the centre of Africa, which is inhabited by Swedenborgians! Now if his disciples really believe in these revelations, why do they not send to the interior of Africa, and afford the world this one proof of the inspiration of their leader? It is easy to swallow absurdities in the gross, but difficult to digest them when dealt out singly.

Hindmarsh has given several instances of the prescience of Swedenborg. They are all of the same character as those with which straggling fortune-tellers in our day, delude the ignorant and superstitious; and what is remarkable, none of these examples are recorded till after their fulfilment. These relations are so puerile, and so nearly approximating to foolishness, that I fear the reader would think me imposing upon him, were I to give examples.

The reader has probably ere this, noticed a resemblance between the religion of Mahomet, and that of Swedenborg. As it respects personal character, they were certainly unlike; but in other respects there is no slight resemblance. Mahomet professed a high regard for the scriptures, and a high reverence for the character of Jesus Christ; so does Swedenborg. Mahomet believed in the Unity of God; so does Swedenborg. Mahomet declared his revela-

tions superior to all others; Swedenborg does the same. Mahomet rejected the aid of miracles to prove his mission, and treats them with contempt; so does Swedenborg. Mahomet declared an eternal war with all who would not receive his doctrines; Swedenborg, as we have seen, shuts them up in a dungeon and leaves them quarrelling. Mahomet declared himself an inspired prophet, repeatedly went to heaven, conversed with God face to face, and is the founder of a new religion; Swedenborg does all this. The one described a sensual and material heaven and hell; so does the other. They both saw marriages in heaven, and lust in hell. The one saw angels whose heads were so large that it would take a bird a thousand years to fly from one ear to the other; the other never allows these angels to turn their faces from the east. The one gave a religion full of absurdities; the other does no less. The former gave us a revelation utterly unworthy of God; the latter levels the Deity to a man. Both religions are alike unfitted for man. Yet in some respects these two men were very dissimilar. Mahomet raised his blood-stained sword, and proclaimed it the key of heaven; Swedenborg unlocks the door quite as effectually by his key of correspondencies. Mahomet spread his religion by fear and force; Swedenborg relies on the ignorance and credulity of mankind. The one was unquestionably the greatest imposter the world ever saw; the other the greatest self-deceiver the world ever pitied. The one came like a demon, strewing his path with desolation, while he trampled on the cross of Christ; the other clothes himself with clouds and mysteries, while he debases Christianity. The one walked on the wings of destruction; the other comes in the stillness that precedes the earthquake. The former shocked us by his hardened and bold impiety; the latter escapes the charge of the most dreadful blasphemy,

my, only because we believe him deranged. Mahomet fed on ambition and conquest; Swedenborg suffered his reason to be devoured by a disordered imagination.

It has been hinted above, that Swedenborg was probably self-deceived by a visionary mania, or enthusiasm. This is all that the utmost stretch of charity can admit. If this was not the case, his is one of the most daring and impious forgeries that the world ever saw. If he was not what we have supposed him—

*"Oh! when he traced the mazes of his plan,
How did his soul contemn deluded man—
Light as the desert sand, on every blast
Of passion's burning gale at random cast;
But on himself he wreaked his deepest
scorn,
Who stooped to cheat a creature so forlorn!"*

I cannot forbear observing, that if this "new dispensation" is such "that all former dispensations only shadowed forth and represented the last and most magnificent of all, the New-Jerusalem"—if "this last and greatest of dispensations, would have its heaven-born glory tarnished by stooping to earth for any thing that resembles a miracle," to prove its truth, then it follows legitimately, that every miracle performed by our Saviour and his Apostles, only proved that their dispensation was involved in "obscurity, doubt, and uncertainty;" and that every miracle which they performed, was a blemish, a stain upon their characters and the religion which they taught. There is no evading this conclusion. The system under consideration reveals no new morals, throws no new light on morals already revealed, and only darkens every point on which it touches. It fairly "puts out the sun of righteousness, and brings back darkness visible." It declares that ever since the days of Christ, if not since the time of Job, the church has been grovelling in darkness and in error. These clouds of darkness can be scattered only by this "new

Star," whose forty volumes of light have for fifty years been shedding their glories on the world. Now I would solemnly ask those who are exerting themselves to spread the system of Swedenborg, if they do really believe in these revelations? If so, have they any evidence for so believing, unless it be the assertions of a fanatic, or a madman? It is in vain for them to tell us to read and examine his works; we have done so; and after wading through volumes of the greatest absurdities and nonsense which were ever printed, we say that there is nothing in Mather's Magnalia, or even the "Rain-water Doctor's" book on diseases, which we could not as easily believe and digest, as the writings of Swedenborg. If his disciples do not believe in these marvellous revelations, why are they endeavouring to make the ignorant believe them? O if I had in my heart to war with any class of men, it would be with those who are making exertions to impose upon others a system of religion so foolish, so pernicious, that they do not, and cannot believe it themselves.

O. E*****.

For the Christian Spectator.

Lay Presbyters.—No. III.

DID there exist in the middle of the second century, more than two kinds of officers; or were elders then of different kinds, must be our inquiry in this number. Polycarp was now in extreme old age; Irenaeus, a youth; Athenagoras, Melito, and Theophilus of Antioch, commencing public life; and Justin Martyr, a Gentile, but christian philosopher, standing but to fall in the front of the battle. He, our almost solitary witness for this period, received his Greek education at Alexandria, in Egypt, and was successively a Stoic, Peripatetic, and Platonist. Occupied in contemplation in a place of retirement near the shore of the sea, he was abruptly encountered, and ef-

fectually vanquished by an aged Christian. The interesting and ingenious arguments are detailed in his dialogue with Trypho. Left to his own reflections, favored with no other interview, wounded by the arrow of conviction, he sought and found his cure in christianity, the only true philosophy. Mingling his old attachments with evangelic charity, he indulged the hope, that Socrates and others had also imbibed, at least, the spirit of the Gospel, in a humble degree.

Retaining the habit, he exhibited a singular spectacle, a philosopher bleeding in the cause of Christ.(a)

The opinions of one, never an ecclesiastic, must have been viewed with less prejudice. Familiar with men of science, the influence of his character on those in power, rendered him important to the suffering cause. His conversion we place at A. D. 132, and his martyrdom at 163, without danger of material error. In his dialogue he mentions his apology. The passage is found in that, which has been placed last, but was the first. This appeal to the understanding, and feelings of the discreet, but mistaken, Antoninus Pius, A. D. 140, whilst the blood of those, whom it defended, was flowing under a merciless persecution, procured a temporary respite.

In his description of public worship,(b) after mentioning prayers and the fraternal salutation, he says,— "There is brought to him who presides over the brethren, τῷ προεστῷ τῷ αδελφῷ, bread and a cup of water, and wine, and he, taking them offers up praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, and renders thanks for these, his gifts. At the close of his petition and thanksgivings, all the people present say Amen; which, in the Hebrew language, signifies may it be so.

(a) οὐ φαμι φιλοσόφου καὶ τοῖς λογοῖς καὶ τῷ βίῳ καὶ τῷ σχηματί.—Photius, 303.

(b) 2 Apolog. 97. Oxford edition. 1 Apol. 127.

And he who presides, having given thanks, εὐχαριστῶν δε του προεστωτος, and the whole assembly having expressed their assent, they who are called among us deacons, διακονοι, distribute the bread, and the wine and water, to each of those who are present, to partake of that which has been blessed. Also they carry to those who are not present."

His birth in Samaria, the natural acumen of his understanding, his philosophical education at Alexandria, christian instruction, through eight years, in provincial Asia, and religious associations at Rome, are pledges, that Justin knew the forms of christian worship. His piety, character, and death, secure to his testimony the claim of indefectible veracity. The high ground which he assumed, as the advocate of the whole proscribed church, before the Emperor and Senate of the civilized world, rendered every word a matter of life and death, and required absolute verity. Under all these appalling circumstances he testifies that two orders only officiated, a president, προεστως, who taught, prayed, and administered the eucharist, and deacons, who distributed the symbolical elements. Lay-elders are not named, but there is an express assignation to deacons of the work now thought by some to belong peculiarly and exclusively to them; a violent presumption that there were no such officers.

The same word προεστως, *ruling* elder, deemed the principal and almost solitary scriptural(c) proof of this lay order, is here the clerical character. If Paul meant by it a lay presbyter, it is strange that, in forty years from John's death, the ruling elder προεστως has become, throughout the church, the presiding officer in every charge—the mouth of the people unto God; and standing in the place of Jesus Christ, takes, blesses, and administers the memorials of his body and blood, devolving

his own original employment, if a lay elder, upon deacons who had been *solemnly ordained*, to feed the poor.

If the "brethren" αδελφων over whom he presided were the people, his authority may be referred to his office as presbyter; if they were his co-presbyters, or bishops, for such existed in all the churches, and have appeared in those of Smyrna, of Philippi, Corinth, and Rome, he was that *primus inter pares*, who from necessity exists in all presbyteries, councils, assemblies, and other public bodies. Among presbyters, the presidency rested not on ordination, but a voluntary concession, by reason of seniority, talents, grace, or influence. Επισκοπος is a word of stronger import: the προεστως far from having the oversight of his copresbyters, retained only the *first standing* in the same order. If according to those suppositions letters too zealously attributed to the venerable Ignatius, the επισκοπος had presided in every church, Justin must have known it, and used the term, or have been justly chargeable with misrepresentation. But the term, bishop, being equally applicable to every presbyter, as having the oversight of the flock, could not have distinguished the presiding bishop from his brethren, at whose head he had been placed by common consent, for reasons founded in utility. In the same apology, precious to the ancient christians for its timely aid in a season of extreme suffering, it is again published to the world, that, "upon that, which is called the day of the Sun, there is an assembling together of all of the respective cities, or residing in the country; and the recollections of the apostles, and the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; when the reader has ceased, he who presides, ὁ προεστως, by a discourse, δια λόγου, admonishes and exhorts, to the imitation of things that are good. We then all rise up together, and offer prayer, and as already mentioned, when the prayer is ended, bread is

(c) I Tim. v, 17.

brought, and wine and water. And he *who has the first place*, ὁ προεστως, again prays and gives thanks, *according to his ability*, ὥση δυναμις αυτω, and the people add their approbation, saying, Amen. And a distribution and delivery of the things, upon which thanks have been given, are made to all, and sent to those who are absent, by the deacons.”(d) He then speaks of the lifting of a collection for widows, orphans, prisoners, and strangers,—which is deposited παρα τω προεστωτι, *with the president*.

Had error obtained in the former description of worship, Justin would probably have discovered it in his second effort. If a martyr for the truth, which he records, is not worthy of credit, sincerity can offer no higher pledge. He has a second time described the officers of a christian church, employed in the most solemn act of public worship, the eucharist, and again he has said they were the προεστως *scil.* πρεσβυτερος, *presiding elder*, and the διακονοι, *deacons*.

It were weakness to expect him to deny the existence of lay presbyters, an order which had then never been named, or, as we suppose, thought of. The reader of the lessons may have been a copresbyter, or any well taught member of the Church. The presiding presbyter expounded and applied the lesson orally; his prayers were also unwritten, because “*according to his ability*;” and he alone administered the eucharist, the deacons distributing the symbols to the people. The word προεστως being a participle, and written without its noun, determines only an order, of which this person *stood first*. Every christian knew πρεσβυτερος, *elder*, was intended; and other readers, from the force of the term, must have understood, from its application to Archons and Ephori, that an order, ecclesiastic and peculiar to a single worshiping assembly was meant.

(a) 2 Apolog. 99, Oxford edit. 1 Apol. 13, 12.

This history establishes the fact, that the *elder, who ruled*, πρεσβυτερος προεστως, was the same who laboured in word κοπιων εν λογω (e) and that *ruling* should be understood not of inferior duties, but of the presidency.

In the writings of Clement, and Polycarp, it has appeared, that a plurality of presbyters, or bishops, existed at Ephesus, Philippi, Corinth, and Rome; and that these, with the deacons, were their only officers. In every regularly constituted church, the same orders appear, by the new testament, to have been ordained. No instance has hitherto occurred of the erection of an office, or order, of higher authority, than that of presbyters, or bishops; nor does there as yet, appear among them any disparity. One only in every church was the προεστως, either designated by his co-presbyters, or by the society. It would have been improper for Justin, in his description of the public eucharistic service, to have mentioned those presbyters, who, for the time present, acted no other part, than merely to partake with the people. Neither did the distinctive name discribe, nor the work of him who presided, prove him to be of a superior order. Although προεστως was used among the Lacedæmonians, for one of the Ephori, yet they possessed an equality of power and grade. Annually elected by the people, they held the supreme authority, could summon before them, charge and pass judgment upon the king himself. The προεστως of the presbyters or bishops of a church, worshipping at the same time, in different places, in a city, was the nearest approach to diocesan episcopacy. Yet the term, by which he was distinguished from the other

(e) I Tim. v, 17. Thus the Apostle Paul, also in I Thesal. v, 12, by the word *laboring τους κοπιωντας in the word, and set over, και προσταυεντας*, the church at Thessalonica, and admonishing them, *προφετοντας*, evidently means the same persons and presbyters, as appears by the omission of the article after the conjunction, before the latter epithets.

bresbyters, being the very same that was used for the president of the moral censors of Sparta, who were of equal degree; and the term *προεστως*, by its own force, implying no more than the first place or station, and not a diversity in the kind of office, it was discovered by rising ambition, to be necessary to abandon the word, and adopt, as we shall soon find, the word *επισκοπος* when a further distinction was intended. Neither was the *προεστως* of the Ephori clothed with the power of a dictator; nor his colleagues in office reduced to the condition of subordinate, and merely dependent counsellors. In like manner the *προεστως* of presbyters was by no means vested with the sole power of ordaining and deciding, nor were his copresbyters in any church selected, merely to advise, or execute.

The letter of the church at Smyrna, descriptive of the death of Polycarp, if genuine, falls into the middle part of this century. Pionius, as appears by its postscript, obtained it by a *revelation* made to him by Polycarp, long after his death. It represents that the martyr had a *vision*, by which he was preadmonished of his martyrdom by fire; that he was apprehended on *Friday*, brought on an *ass* to the city; that he was accosted when coming to the place of suffering by a *voice from heaven*; that, by a *wonderful miracle*, the flame encompassed him in a hollow circle and his body could not be burned, but afterwards was wounded, and was, when dead, consumed by fire; that an odour ascended *like frankincense and rich spices*; that being pierced with a lance, *a dove escaped*, and the blood *extinguished the fire*. The pious and venerable Polycarp, in extreme old age, suffered martyrdom about the middle of the second century. Of this no one doubts; and that many of the sorrowful circumstances of it, may have been embodied in this wondrous letter, is possible; but how much of it is true, must be submitted to every

reader. Those who will compare that which is supposed to be the letter itself, with Eusebius, will see that even where he professes to give the words, he omits, interpolates, changes and mangles the letter, in a manner suited to destroy all confidence in the representations of Constantine's favored historian. The letter we believe, never mentions either the word presbyter or deacon. It purports to have been written by one church unto another, omitting the officers of both. In it the word bishop once occurs—*γενομενος επισκοπος τε τη εν Σμυρνη καθολικης εκκλησιας*. “Being a bishop of the Catholic church in Smyrna.” That Polycarp was a presbyter, that every presbyter was a bishop, and that a plurality of this order existed in every church, have been shown. We have also already ventured the supposition that he was a *προεστως, presiding presbyter*. For president, the term bishop was soon after this, substituted. If *επισκοπος* be so taken in this letter, against which we confess the omission of the article to be no argument, the anticipation is fatal to the genuineness of that sentence, and thrown into the scale, renders still lighter the credibility of the whole letter.

The character of Hegesippus, a Jewish convert, who wrote five historical books, which have, except fragments, perished, has been doubted by many writers, catholic and protestant. Also the circumstance that these fragments, except an irrelevant sentence preserved by Photius, have been derived from Eusebius, and no doubt accommodated to the language of his own times, renders his evidence of little weight. This historian introduces his quotation by *εν οις δηλοις (f) in which he discovers*; and then, proceeding in his own words, he says, “going to Rome he” Hegesippus, “fell in company with many bishops”—“and found them to hold the same doctrine.” That the church of Corinth remained or-

(f) Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. iv, ch. 22.

thodox, εν τω ορθω λογω, until the time of Primus' acting as bishop, επισκοπουντος, in Corinth."—"Being in Rome I abode until the succession of Anicetus, whose deacon Eleutherus was; Soter succeeded Anicetus, and Eleutherus, Soter."

"After James, the just, died, as his Lord had done, for the same word, Simon the son of Cleopas, his uncle, was chosen bishop, whom all preferred, because he was the Lord's next kinsman."

The denominating presbyters, bishops, is unexceptionable, for such they were. That one of them presided in every church from the Apostles' days is equally certain. To reckon up the succession by these, was in no wise improper. But all these things fall far short of proving a diversity of office among presbyters, or a difference of order.

An Apostle, as such, possessed powers and had duties to accomplish beyond those of a presiding presbyter. We ought not therefore to conclude, that, because the scriptures have not mentioned the travels of James, all his labors were confined to Jerusalem. The numbers sometimes mentioned to be there, probably include visitants coming up to the feasts. There is no evidence of an extention of his authority over Judea, though the thing is possible; or that there were then different places of worship of christians in Jerusalem. And if there had been, and he had exercised a general authority, it was that of an Apostle. That the Apostles should have successors in their ordinary powers, to teach, baptise, ordain, censure, &c. may be fairly inferred from the promise of Christ's presence, which could only be divine, annexed to their commission. That these duties were to be performed by the presbyters, or bishops of every particular church, is capable of positive proof. That in every presbetry there came to be a president, is undeniable. But it remains to be

(g) Ibid. and Nicephor, Cal. lib. iv, c. 7.

proved that such officer received a second ordination, either by scriptural authority, or in the Apostles' days ;(h) or that the presbyters of a church were so ordained, as that one species of them was authorized to preach, and another restrained from the exercise of such power.

Having now passed the middle of the second century and found one kind only of Elders, and these the only ministers of the word, we may infer that *such is the fair construction of the New Testament*, on the ordinary officers of the church. The innovations which we are soon to witness in their gradual progress, were unauthorized and consequently *mere nullities*. Though every denomination has on some point erred, and the original names of the officers have been often changed, the providence of God has in every age preserved the two orders, and a legitimate administration. But if the outward forms had all perished, being only means to an end, and consequently of minor importance, the characteristics of his true church have remained, "*righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost?*"

J. P. W.

A SERMON.

Psalm cxix, 60.—I made haste, and delayed not, to keep thy commandments.

This language leads us to the retirement of a saint, and exhibits to us an holy soul, maintaining intercourse with God. We hear, in it, the pious breathings of the Psalmist, communing in secret with Jehovah. He looks back on his past life; he recalls to mind seasons, in which "he thought on his ways, and turned his feet unto the divine testimonies"; and in view of those seasons he

(h) The *Apostolical constitutions* need no refutation. The *Apostolical traditions*, referred to by Hippolitus, we design to consider, when he arrives, in the first part of the third century.

makes the appeal to God : " I made haste, and delayed not, to keep thy commandments." I deferred not obedience to thy statutes.

The propriety of such an address to God, may be rendered obvious. It is not the language of information. All his conduct, he knew was bare to the view of omniscience. Nor is it boasting. The Psalmist claimed not the merit of having entirely kept the law ; before concluding the Psalm, he made the confession, " I have strayed like a lost sheep." But it is the speech of sincere joy. He could, with sincerity, say to God, that he had obeyed without delay : and he rejoiced in the grace which had enabled him to obey, and in the beneficial effects that resulted from his obedience.

From this language of an experienced saint, then, we learn that there is satisfaction in yielding prompt obedience to the divine commands. There are advantages in *obeying without delay.*

What then is obedience ? The rule of it is the Bible ; the amount of it, holy love.

The commandments which the author of this Psalm made haste to keep, were the books, then written, of divine inspiration. Such indeed is the meaning we are to attach to the words, " testimonies, statutes, judgments, and commandments," which occur so frequently in this Psalm. A revelation made by God to any creature necessarily implies his will, that it should be welcomed by the creature with corresponding belief, feelings, and conduct. Let the revelation assume any form, whether of information, or direct command, threatening, or promise, the creature may clearly perceive, in it, some requisition made on him by the eternal King. The contents of the sacred volume, therefore, (comprising the whole duty of man,) may be, very properly and expressively, called, (as were the divine books already in existence when the Psalmist wrote,) the statutes or commandments of Jehovah.

The great requisition of Jehovah on man is disinterested *love.* The whole aim of revelation is, to excite in men holy love to their Creator and their fellow men. On these two great statutes in the empire of Jehovah, hang all the law and the prophets and the apostles. The whole bible is employed, in various methods, to explain and enforce these commands. All the inspired books, in whatever dress they appear, to whatever primary end they were directed, conspire, as their ultimate end, to throw light on the objects we should love, and the mode in which we should exercise our love to them, and to animate us, by motives of hope and fear, to run with diligence the way of these commands.

The bible, however, acknowledges us to have wandered from these commands. It meets us as persons not having by nature the love of God in our hearts. It would indeed be unsuited to our wants, unless it did. We are perishing in sin, and it comes to seek us and restore us to life. We dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and it comes, like the day-spring of heaven, to give us light, and to guide our bewildered feet into the way of peace. We have turned our backs on God and his holy kingdom, and it comes to invite us back again to a share in his service, and a place in his happy family. We all, like sheep, have broke from the fold of God and wandered upon the mountains of a strange land ; in that blessed book, to use its own beautiful imagery, we hear the voice and see the footsteps of the Great Shepherd, who has come to "seek out his sheep, and deliver them out of all the places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day ; to bring them again to their own land and feed them upon the mountains of Israel."

Obedience then, in such a revolted world as ours, must imply repentance for past sin, and faith in the proposed medium of recovery through Christ. Converts must come to

God, weeping, and be led in his ways, with suppliant reliance on Jesus.

By delaying obedience, therefore, as I shall speak of it in the present discourse, I mean the delay of the unregenerate sinner to enter on a holy life, or the delay of the Christian to practise particular duties; and by making haste, prompt entrance on such a life, or a prompt fulfilment of its duties.

With these explanations, I proceed to exhibit reasons why you should make haste, and delay not, to keep the commandments of God.

The motives then, which shall be presented to dissuade you from delaying obedience, are derived from three sources: the evil effects of delay on *obedience*, on *happiness*, and on *usefulness*.

I. By delaying obedience, you diminish your ability to obey.

We cannot indeed draw moral lines, with the precision with which we do mathematical; still, we talk intelligibly and rationally, when we speak of the amount of obedience paid by a creature, and of that amount being greater in one case than in another. Does not Gabriel move in a much more exalted sphere of obedience than the best Christian now on earth? And why? Because his understanding has winged its way farther into the abyss of the divine existence, and his heart glows with a more ardent flame of love.

The present life, when compared in its duration with our future existence, is nothing. The youth of eight, and the man of ninety, have entered, alike, but the threshold of eternity. But when it is regarded as influencing that eternity, a single day of it may be every thing. We enter the present life, morally unable to obey. A single day may decide whether we ever shall be able, or how great shall be our moral impotency, or how great our moral power through everlasting ages. The sinner, though from the first unable, may by delay disable himself still more; and the

Christian, though he receive his ability from God, shall never be improved by loitering in his course.

Let us trace then, one moment, the effects which delay may have on our obedience.

Your resolution, yesterday, to neglect the commands of God still longer, has given you one day more for rivetting your heart to sin, one day more for silencing the voice of conscience, and one day more of which to be ashamed, should you return to obedience. That resolution, then, has deprived you of strength you never can recover; loaded you with chains you never can unbind. You can never place yourself again in so favorable a situation for obedience as you were in before you took the heedless resolution. The man who resolved yesterday for the first, to walk in the commands of God, has been, for one day, breaking off his attachment to sin; he has enjoyed, one day, the calm of a peaceful conscience; and through grace, has laid up one day as the food of future comfortable reflection. That resolution, then, has given him strength he never possessed before; it has removed clogs with which he was before fettered; it has shed fresh light upon a path before dark. The two men then, who were yesterday, we will suppose, together in their moral condition, are now wide apart. The impudent sinner who delayed obedience to the divine commands for one day, is now drawn still more closely in the chains of bondage. The sinner who made haste to obey them, now begins to taste the liberty of the sons of God. No tongue of angels can describe the difference that one day has made in their characters.

But while the two have been pursuing their different resolutions for one day, they have been drawing nearer the period when death shall cut them off from probation. Perhaps the day which they have just spent, was the last assigned them in the secret counsels of heaven. To

day, then, their vigorous bodies shall be brought low. To day, their souls shall enter on the scenes of an unalterable state. The one who yesterday delayed, has lost, by his resolution, the only remnant of time allowed him for repentance, and has added the guilt of another day to the weight of his condemnation. The other, who yesterday made haste, has seized the last moment, and just entered within the pale of eternal mercy. Yesterday they stood together on the brink of endless woe. To day, one plunges into the yawning gulf; the other ascends, on angels' wings, to the heaven of heavens. One day of delay has placed the sinner forever beyond the possibility of returning to obedience, and decided his character, as a sinner, for eternity.

But suppose that, by divine mercy, their lives are spared, and the one who yesterday delayed, to day resolves to make haste: yet his ability will have been lessened by the delay. Other things equal, he will never make the attainments of him who was but yesterday his companion. The delinquent will have eternally lost the advantages of a day of obedience that are possessed by the other. And in their future course, let one move steadily on in the path of obedience, and the other often loiter; let them enjoy the same opportunities, for the same length of time, on earth; and let them enter, at the same instant, the kingdom of glory: the one who walked with steady and undeviating feet, in the path of holiness, will have made a much greater proficiency in his obedience, than he who was once his companion; and he shall wear a brighter crown, occupy a higher throne, and pour forth more rapturous songs to the Redeemer, through everlasting ages.

I would dissuade you from delaying obedience, by a consideration of the evil effects of delay,

II. On happiness.

No truth is plainer than that, in

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the kingdom of God, happiness will ultimately be proportioned to holy obedience. This truth will be exemplified, not only in the kingdom of holiness, but in the kingdom of grace. The rewards bestowed on redeemed men in a future life, will be "according to their deeds done in the body." Christ in the parable of the different talents committed to his servants, describes the rewards of eternity as thus dealt in proportion to their faithfulness.

The very nature of obedience, indeed, implies proportionate enjoyment. Holy love to God is, in itself, a source of enjoyment; and is attended with many other sources of joy—the divine favor, peace of conscience, and hope of future good—which rise or fall, with it, in proportion. Though on earth, the followers of Christ must needs suffer affliction through manifold trials, yet these outward troubles have no power to rob them of the peace they possess in God. The present favor of Christ and the hope of his eternal love, cheers the darkest hours of their pilgrimage. He breathes on them the influence of the Holy Spirit, and they feel the efficacy of his parting gift; "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

The effect of delay on obedience, as it has already been illustrated, is, therefore, on this principle, an illustration, so far, of its effect on happiness. If delay while it continues, prevent a sinner from obeying at all, it prevents him from enjoying at all the happiness of obedience; if it cut him off from probation while in his sins, it cuts him off from all future happiness; if it continue for a season only, and the sinner afterward turn his feet unto the divine testimonies, every moment of delay deprives him, so long, of the happiness of obedience, and will, proportionally, diminish the whole current of his future felicity.

But delay does not simply deprive

a man of the happiness of obedience; it inflicts positive evil. It involves, in its very nature, a clear perception of the path of duty and a deliberate resolution to neglect it; and consequently, he who delays complying with his duty, must experience painful reflections from the conviction of meriting the displeasure of God and the disapprobation of his own conscience.

Pain from the displeasure of God. Let a man clearly perceive that God points out to him the path in which he should go, and at the same time deliberately choose another, and he will need no messenger from heaven to announce that God is angry with him. The voice of Jehovah has already broken from the skies ; its sound has already gone forth to the ends of the earth ; that he is a God taking no pleasure in iniquity. That sin is the abominable thing which his soul hateth, he has manifested in all his dealings toward our world since the day our first parents revolted in Eden. He has proclaimed it by the waters of the deluge and by the flames of Sodom ; in the terrors of Sinai and in the compassions of Calvary. He has lifted up the vail from the eternal world, and bid us read it in the sufferings of his final enemies.

Now the man who defers to walk in the path of duty, go whither he will, is out of the region of divine protection. He stands on ground where God is determined to pour down the storms of his fury. He cannot, then, wholly exclude from his mind the painful apprehension of the wrath of God. He must, now and then, stumble in the snares and gins that an angry God has placed in his way. He will, now and then, see the heavens darkening over his head, and tremble with forebodings of "the horrible tempest."

In addition to these pangs which often interrupt the pleasures of the delaying sinner, he must experience pain, also, from the disapprobation of conscience.

Delay implies, that in view of ob-

jects proposed to his pursuit by God, a person deliberately seeks his gratification in objects of his own choice. He therefore who delays obedience, in order to pursue his own chosen way, will not merely suffer fear, through apprehension of the wrath of God, but shame also, in perceiving the folly of his choice.

The man who yesterday resolved to neglect the commands of God still longer to pursue his own imaginations, received, that moment, the broad stamp of heaven, "Thou fool." He has not yet drank of a single cistern, but God saw it before him, and wrote upon it, "vanity of vanities." The infinite wisdom and love, which, in view of all objects in the universe, selected the only proper ones for the pursuit of a rational nature, pours eternal shame on all the devices of his heart. The gratifications, to which he gave the preference, when he bade the messenger of heaven depart for a season, he now sees, are empty, and debasing to his rational nature. They may pamper the body but they starve the immortal soul. There is a mighty void within, which these trifles never fill, a restless craving they never satisfy. The body may multiply its indulgences, or frequently change them to pacify the soul, but this unsatisfied, neglected, abused inmate, conscious of her superior claims and alive to her neglects, still weeps in her secret places.

The sinner, then, who refuses to attend the rich feast of the Gospel that he may sit down at his own entertainment, shall find his cups mingled with wrath and his food infected with poison. Divine displeasure and his own conscience shall mar his empty pleasures.

These miseries are inflicted both on the delaying sinner and the delaying saint. The saint who has made haste hitherto, but now slackens his course ; who feels the slightest alienation of heart from God and neglects to repair the breach by an immediate return ; shall find each

moment of delay draw upon him the chastisements of God and his own conscience. God and this inward monitor, are the eternal foes of delay.—Whenever a wandering sinner refuses to return to his duty, they allow him into his dark retreat. No recesses will be found so deep but their voice will pierce the silence, with the confounding inquiry, first made to fallen Adam, "Where art thou?" The discovery will sting with reproof, and clothe with blushes of shame.

I would dissuade you from delaying obedience, by a consideration of the evil effects of delay,

III. On Usefulness.

Usefulness consists in the employment of our faculties to diffuse happiness. Now if the happiness of an individual ultimately result from his keeping the commandments of God, happiness is to be diffused in any circle of beings by prevailing on them also to keep his commandments. To be useful, then, a man must employ his talents to promote among his fellowmen obedience to God. His usefulness, too, will be in exact proportion to the extent to which he prevails on others to observe, or observes himself, the statutes of Jehovah. On this principle surely will the usefulness of every action be decided at the day of Judgment. Many of the employments of life are directed, immediately, to advancing the temporal happiness of men; to providing comforts for their bodies, and to strengthening and adorning their minds. Yet no farther than these exertions are subordinated to those higher ends, will they, at the judgment and in the progress of eternity, appear to have been useful. The cup of cold water, given to relieve bodily want, must be given in love to Christ, in order to receive a reward. All efforts, whether terminating more immediately on the bodies or the souls of men, their temporal or their spiritual interests, if made in love to Christ, promote so far an obedient

temper in the persons who make them and are so far useful; and as far as they diffuse the same temper of love to Christ abroad, so much is added to their usefulness.

Now let us examine the effects which delay to keep the commandments of God must have on our usefulness.

The person who delays, chooses his own devices in preference to the commands of God; *he will make no hearty exertions, therefore, to induce others to follow the Lord.* A man must love a course of conduct himself, sincerely to recommend it to others. He who stands hesitating whether to enter the strait gate or not, will have no face, nor heart, to bid others enter. His reluctance to give himself to the service of Christ, his wish to spend a little longer season in the pleasures of sin himself, will effectually bar his heart against any ardent wishes or efforts for the salvation of his fellow-men. Opportunities daily present themselves for his giving testimony to the excellence of religion, but he has no such testimonies to give. There are sinners on every side, whom he might tell of a Savior's love, but his frozen heart cannot feel. He stands unaffected amid a race whose sufferings drew the Beloved of the Father from his throne to relieve. He stirs not a finger in that cause, which could move the Son of God to clothe himself in our humble nature, and in that nature, labor and suffer and die. There is a wide field of usefulness open before him, in which he might reap an abundant harvest; but the loiterer wastes the season in idleness. Multitudes are passing by him on the road to endless death, some of whom he might arrest, and induce to walk the narrow way to life, but while he stands hesitating, they pass forever beyond his reach.

Delay however will render a man not only useless, but *through the influence of his example, positively pernicious.* However strong convictions a delaying person may have of duty, however sharp his inward

misgivings may be at his own conduct, he must be considered, by others, simply in the light of a disobedient man. The man who hangs back from obedience, will always be ranked, by the iniquitous, as espousing their cause. Hesitation to go forward in duty, will be put down by all who are decided, either way, as open rebellion. The example, therefore, so far as it has any effect, will be positively pernicious. The weight which it has, will be so much taken from "the Commonwealth of Israel," and given to "the armies of the aliens." The man who delays to pray in the closet, the family, or the sanctuary, whatever may be his secret intentions for the future, emboldens all the legions of the prayerless and profane. The man who delays to receive Christ and espouse his cause, emboldens all the crowds who openly reject and deride the gospel. The man who delays to act for benevolent objects, emboldens all the hosts of opposition. The man who delays to act for the salvation of men, emboldens all the ranks who are leagued with Satan for their destruction.

He then who resolves still longer to delay obedience, resolves, in effect, still longer to countenance the throng who are marching in the broad road to death; still longer to exhibit an example, murderous to the souls of others. Just so long as he delays, so long does he lend the influence of his example to draw souls to perdition. Should he continue to defer his duty till he is surprised by death, his whole life would prove ruinous to his own soul and to the souls of all affected by his example.

From the influence of delay then, in regard to obedience, happiness, and usefulness, we may perceive the importance of our making haste to keep the commandments of God.

Let my hearers then, open their consciences to conviction, while, in view of this subject, I urge upon them the question, why should you

delay obedience to God? I direct the question, first, to those who, through grace, may have turned their feet unto the divine testimonies: my brethren, when the word of God, or conscience, or providence, points you to a duty, why should you ever hesitate to comply?

Do you make it your aim to be obedient? Delay, in this instance, will but load you with fetters, and retard your progress. This single act may seem small; but it cherishes the plant of an evil habit, and the repetition of these single acts, is giving it size, rigidity, and strength.

You perceive a duty, and delay? Were you consulting your own happiness, you mistake in your decision. The pleasures you seek to taste by delay, will be turned into the bitterness of gall, by the disapprobation of God and conscience. The terrors you apprehend in making haste, can never cloud the light of a smiling Heaven, nor ruffle the calm of a peaceful breast.

You see a duty, and delay: but why? Do you desire to be useful? In such a changing and evil world as this, nothing but haste in obeying God can make the useful man. Nothing but ready obedience can create a Moses, a Daniel, a Paul. All great enterprises on earth, good or bad, have been effected by those who were prompt in action. Look back on the current of ages, and you see no traces of the millions that have perished, but in the few that have made haste to improve and exert their talents in good or in evil. The whole cloud of worthies recorded on the sacred page, now in heaven, wrought all their noble deeds by practically adhering to the maxim of the Great Captain of Salvation, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." We are strangers on the earth, sojourning but a day; and what we do for the reformation and salvation of the world, we must do quickly.

Christians, soldiers of the cross,

you have no time for delay. Much of your time has already been lost. Much will be, unless grace prevent. With shame and supplication, then, kneel before the mercy-seat, and cry, "Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments."

I would put the question suggested by this subject, again, to those who have never yet trod the way of God. Why, my fellow-sinners, do you delay to enter, with prompt and decided purpose of soul, upon his service?

Say not, "Our present course is well." Is it well to disincline your hearts from the service of God? to deprive yourselves of the sweet experience of souls humbled at the divine footstool? to spend your days in leading immortal souls to ruin? Can it be well, to give the best of your days to the world, and reserve no better offering for the Savior, than the poor remains of a mis-spent life?

Why do you delay? Say not, "There is time enough yet." The arrows of death smite your companions, on the right hand and on the left. The bow may already be bent, that is to make you its victim, and place you forever beyond the reach of hope.

Why delay? Say not, "There is

no help for our souls in God."— "There is no hope; we have loved strangers, and after them we will go." The bible addresses you, not merely as a book of statutes, condemning you beyond reprove: it acknowledges you as sinners, and offers you a remedy. It makes a proclamation of pardon, sealed with the blood of the Son of God. It presents a renewing, quickening, comforting, redeeming Spirit. The holiest man, on earth or in glory, is but a sinner saved by grace. Come freely, then, to the fountain of life, and drink immortal joys.

God, angels, the world, hell, call on you to decide quickly. The spirits of the just, who, through lives of faith, and toil, and patience on earth, are now enjoying the rich inheritance of the promises, stand as waiting spectators, to see you commence the christian race. Could they burst the silence of the eternal world, they would give you no other nor weightier message than this: "Haste to the Saviour. Let his statutes be your songs in the house of your pilgrimage. Forget not your brethren and sisters of the human family; pray and labor for their salvation. Come to the skies; but Oh, come not without bringing many souls to swell your joys, and adorn the triumphs of your Redeemer." AMEN.

Miscellaneous.

For the Christian Spectator.

The Reign of David.—No. III.

Having in my last essay finished the examination of the state of the Arts, I will now proceed to the

Literature of this Age.

The reign of David is marked by the enlargement of his empire, by a great improvement in the art of war, and by a new spring to commerce; but in none of these is his influence so visible, as in the impulse he gave

to the intellectual character of Palestine. The intervals of leisure which he enjoyed during the time of peace, gave him an opportunity to cultivate his poetic talents. These were improved by the monarch with all that ardour which is essential to success. He early refined and softened the rough affections of his people, by giving them a taste for music, which was introduced at their national and religious festivals, and accompanied it with songs and poems, composed

for important occasions. In these he exhibited every variety of feeling, from the deepest distress, to enthusiastic joy. The great popularity of the king prepared the minds of the Israelites to be impressed by his poetic genius. During the reign of the Judges, the Israelites were so continually involved in war with the surrounding nations, or agitated with internal convulsions, that they became entirely destitute of refinement, and had sunk into a state of semi-barbarism. The age of Saul, though principally free from internal commotions, was replete with war and invasions, and all the cruelties attendant upon them. The subjects of Saul were constantly familiar with scenes of this character, as Palestine was the common battle ground for the neighbouring nations. Objects of this kind being constantly exposed to their view, their minds became callous to suffering, and their progress toward refinement was greatly retarded.

During these two periods the Hebrews were alternating between victory and subjection,—and under the Judges, the hand of the enemy was so heavy upon them, that Palestine was not only impoverished and greatly distressed, but the spirit of the nation was broken. In such times of national calamity, little was done to excite among the Hebrews a love for poetry. It is not improbable that in these times of subjection, some of the poets may have, under the influence of deep feeling, poured forth their elegies over their fallen country, but if so, they were forgotten on the return of victory. Whenever a judge arose, he removed the yoke from their necks, and poured into their cup the luxury of freedom, but their sky was soon overcast, and with the death of their deliverer, perished all their hopes. In these intervals of liberty, the poetic genius of the Hebrews was probably often resuscitated from its long sleep, and at every victory over the uncircumcised, the virgins of Israel greeted

the conqueror with music and dancing, while the bard poured forth in the wildness of nature his song of triumph. These poems may have been committed to memory, and sung in the cottages of Israel, and in some degree kept alive the spirit of freedom, but their influence was transient, as the Israelites then wanted that national feeling, which could not exist while the judges were regarded as rulers of one or more tribes, and not as leaders of the nation. Accordingly we find, that although they animated the valour of the tribes united in them, they found it impossible to awaken that national enthusiasm, which is indispensable to a continued enjoyment of liberty, and after a few years they again bent their necks to the yoke of the conqueror. The song of Deborah and Barak, is the only specimen of this species of poetry we have remaining, written during the interval which elapsed between the death of Joshua and Samuel. This is so beautiful, and so replete with the enthusiasm of victory, that no one can peruse it, without lamenting that no more of their heroic songs of this period have been rescued from oblivion.

Had such songs been extensively sung at any other period of their history, they would have inspired the Hebrews with a resolution which nothing could overcome. At this time there was no common bond of interest. They had no monarch to whom they owed allegiance, no royal residence, no court, which kept alive a national feeling. Their minds were unhinged by the commotions which had so long agitated Palestine. Even their religion, in which their ancestors had felt so much exultation, and which, while it existed, was a powerful stimulus to national feeling, had been in a great measure swept away, by the deluge of idolatry which overflowed the Holy land. Such were the causes which retarded the progress of the mind, until near the conclusion of this age of violence,

when the prophet Samuel arose, and gave a new impulse to the literature of his country. He formed a school where the young Israelites destined for the service of God were assembled. In this sacred college they were instructed in their religion, and in praising God in hymns and songs, accompanied with music. In this school, secluded from the world, they probably passed most of their time in studying their national history, and their code of laws, and composed many hymns in praise of the Deity. When victory crowned the arms of the Hebrews, they probably wrote hymns of thanksgiving, in which they ascribed their triumphs to him who reigned omnipotent. These poems may have produced some effect on the Israelites, but much less than if they had associated more with the Hebrews. They were, it is true, occasionally sent with messages from the prophet who presided over the school, and on great occasions Samuel appeared in sight of all Israel, and made known to them the will of Heaven; but as most of their lives were passed in seclusion, the influence they exerted must have been limited. Samuel does not appear to have been distinguished for his poetic talents, and the effect which he produced was the result of accident, rather than design.

It remained for the young hero of Elah, to awaken in the minds of his countrymen a true poetic feeling, and keep alive among them a love for poetry. While in his boyhood, wandering over the hills and mountains of Palestine, his mind was impressed with all the sublime and beautiful, which is so visible in the scenery of the Holy land. Here he studied the poetry of nature, caught the bold outlines of all that was grand and lovely, which by mingling with his feelings, he was enabled to impress upon his poetry. Here he watched the storms, which hovering over the mountains of his native land, descend with so much fury into the vallies beneath. The sublimity of such

scenes he felt in all its power, and when he wishes to exhibit God in the awfulness of his magnificence, he arrays him in the habiliments of the storm and the tempest, throws around him all the obscurity of clouds and darkness, while lightnings flash and thunders roll at his pleasure. His early education furnished him with all the elements of poetry, and it needed nothing but cultivation, and the opportunity which he afterwards enjoyed, to give a new direction to the minds of his countrymen, to soften their taste, and to mould them into a certain degree of refinement, and delicacy.

When he first appeared before the Israelites, it was in a situation peculiarly fitted to produce an intense interest in his welfare. His victory over the giant of Gath, would under any circumstances, have excited great joy. When they realised that it was performed by a stripling, by one who had never before been armed with any weapon more formidable than the staff of a shepherd boy, they believed that to him they were to look for future deliverance, and whenever he approached, greeted him with a shout of applause. No wonder that the virgins of Israel when they saw him return from battle, should have welcomed him with a song of praise accompanied with music and other demonstrations of joy, or that while one division of the singers should have sung Saul's triumph over *thousands*, the alternate choir should in their song, have rewarded him with *ten thousand* of the Philistines as trophies of his valour. All wished to know who this young stripling was, and all paid this tribute of admiration at his approach. His subsequent victories over their enemies did not disappoint the bright expectations they had formed of his valour. They believed that he was to humble their enemies, and to keep the flame of freedom continually burning in Palestine. In his afflictions while at the court of Saul, when his life was daily in jeopardy, and subsequently

while hunted by the king through the mountains of Judah, the Israelites doubtless believed with Abigail, that the “life of David was bound up in the bundle of life, and that the Lord would make his house sure ;” and although they did not in any numbers come forward in his defence, probably few prayers ascended from the heart of the contrite, that were not “winged with benisons for him.” His escape from the hands of Saul, while almost within his grasp, must have excited a sympathetic joy in the minds of all who realised his innocence, while his subsequent generosity to the king, awakened a universal feeling of admiration.

It was under such circumstances that David ascended the throne; and so great was the enthusiasm of his native tribe, that without consulting their brethren, they anointed him as their king. During the divided state of the kingdom, which continued until the death of Mephibosheth, he found but little time to devote to his muse. When all the tribes united in him, he established his court at Jerusalem. Here, in his intervals of leisure, he celebrated that Being who had delivered him from so many evils—who had watched over him while an exile from court, and wandering among the deserts of Judah—who had guarded him in the heat of battle, and enabled him to triumph over his enemies.

In examining the literature of the reign of David, it will be impossible to enter into a minute analysis of the book of Psalms, to examine the claims which each author has to the poems which bear his name, the circumstances under which they were written, as derived from internal evidence, or the history of the book, as quoted by the writers of the Old and New Testaments. These subjects, to do them justice, would require a volume instead of an essay. From the limited knowledge we have of the titles, the events to which they refer, (many of which are too minute to be recorded in the national history of the He-

brews,) and of the musical instruments by which they were accompanied, such an examination would open so ample a field of conjecture, as to leave little satisfaction in the mind of the reader. My object at the present time, is to exhibit the influence David exerted on the literature of the Hebrews—the character of his poems, and those of the literati residing at his court, and the influence of his poetry in refining and softening the rough affections of his subjects.

I. The changes he produced on the literature of the Hebrews.

Before his reign, the poetry of the Israelites was principally heroic,—mere exhibitions of national enthusiasm, enkindled by a recent victory, or by the valor of one of their heroes. These songs exhibit all the out-breakings of joy attendant upon success in war, especially when by it they were delivered from servitude, or imminent danger, through the interposition of the Deity, or the valor of their chieftain. These victories usually flowed from following the directions of God, who to the eye of the poet appears the Deity of the nation. In most abrupt, but sublime language, they call upon the heavens to listen, and the earth to attend, while they describe the glory of their great deliverer. They recount the promises he made to their fathers, and exhibit in their triumphs the fulfilment of his word. They take a retrospect of the wonders God had wrought, and delight to speak of the miracles by which he had delivered them from evil. They dwell with delight on the glory of each tribe, and taking the mantle of their great progenitor, they describe their ancestors in the poetic language of Jacob, as either about to occupy, or as having taken possession of the promised land. They trace their conquests over the nations which formerly inhabited Palestine, or opposed them in their progress thither, and having sung their fall, they check for a moment, the current of their feeling, that they may ascribe the victory to God. Having given all the

glory to the Deity, the poem terminates with an allusion to their leader, or to him who had been instrumental in breaking the yoke of the oppressor. These songs are noble bursts of patriotic feeling, filled with praises of the Almighty, around whom they throw all the sublimity of the storm and tempest, and array him in that dark and awful obscurity, which he exhibits when he comes to take vengeance on his enemies. These poems exhibit all that elevation of thought, which would naturally arise from a recollection of the mighty power of Jehovah. In their ascriptions of praise to him who had filled their land with freedom, and with the blessings of heaven, they have not been surpassed by the poets who succeeded them. As specimens of beauty and sublimity, they will awaken enthusiasm and excite admiration, and on every perusal, the reader will find cause to regret, that so few of their heroic songs remain.

Among the alterations produced by David on the literature of the Hebrews, I shall mention,

1st. *The deep tenderness of feeling* which he introduced into their poetry.

The songs which were previously written exhibited feeling; but it was that of enthusiastic joy, rather than of the deep tenderness which is impressed on the poems of David and Jeremiah. They had never experienced the extremes of suffering and joy, which were long realized by the royal poet. The shout of victory, and the virgin's song of praise, had just ceased, when Saul endeavoured to pierce him with his javelin, and although Jonathan interceded with his father, this did not shield him from several subsequent attempts on his life. While residing at the court of the Hebrew king, he daily found that there was but a step between him and death. Nor did his flight from the royal residence deliver him from fear. Dangers multiplied upon him, and he found the fears of death and Sheol constantly terrified him. Although

he was, in several instances, enabled to escape from Saul, just as he was about being sacrificed as a victim to his hatred, he still found no rest for the sole of his foot, and as yet no ark of safety was open to receive him. At the residence of the King of Gath, the vengeance of the Phillistines would have been inflicted upon the conqueror of Goliah, had he not escaped by artifice, and when afterwards he fled to Philistia, as the only refuge then opened for the oppressed, he found his wives and children, and those of his faithful soldiers, adorning the triumphs of the Amalekites. The long internal war which continued until the death of Mephibosheth, must have filled his mind with the deepest anxiety. Even after he ascended the throne of Israel, he found cause for the deepest anguish, when he recollects how basely he had injured and then murdered Uriah; and afterwards, when his subjects revolted, and enlisted under the banner of the rebellious Absalom, he drank deep of the cup of misery, while the subsequent victory added intensity to his grief, as it was connected with the death of his favorite though disloyal son. With a life thus replete with suffering, he must have been under the influence of intense emotions. These feelings were so mingled with his thoughts, that his poems always exhibit a mind strongly excited.

The poets who preceded him had never realized his sorrow, or felt the bitter calamities which he experienced. Their sufferings were of short continuance, and soon relieved by the success which crowned their arms; while his were constant, and often inflicted upon him in consequence of the valor which he exhibited in combating with the giant of Gath. While feeling the consciousness of innocence, he found himself hunted from mountain to mountain, without any apparent possibility of escape, unless he took vengeance on his greatest enemy. Their calamities were national—were those in which the sympathies of the Israelites united in sup-

porting their spirits, and preventing dejection of mind ; his were personal : he stood against the storm almost alone, and with no support but a conscience void of offence, and an ardent confidence in God. His heart is often overwhelmed with sorrow when he remembers his innocence, and, conscious of his integrity, he calls upon God to punish him if he is guilty of the crimes of which he is accused. All the extremes of suffering and joy, are infused into the poems of David, which exhibit a refinement and tenderness of feeling, before unknown. His poetry cannot breathe the spirit of cold intellect or silent admiration. Every thought must receive some ray of joy, or some shade of melancholy, when under the influence of his ardent feelings. He never writes, without the terrors of his past life, or a sudden deliverance from danger, being present to his view. All the events of his life are thus impressed upon his poems, and through all of them there runs a depth of melancholy feeling, or an overflowing of joy, to which there is no parallel in the poetry of the Hebrews.

II. By adapting his poems to the religious worship of the Israelites.

The songs previously written, were composed for particular occasions, and adapted to the peculiar circumstances of the Hebrews. They may have been often sung by parents, while relating to their children the wonderful works which God had wrought for their ancestors, and in this manner they may have been handed down through many generations. They do not appear to have been sung at their public worship, or to have been written for this object. David, when he ascended the throne, took a retrospect of his past life. Here he saw that God had frequently delivered him from the greatest dangers, and rescued him from the snares of death. He remembered how frequently God had showered down upon him his tender mercies, and wrought

for him a great deliverance. With a heart overflowing with gratitude and love to his great benefactor, he resolved to devote his poetic talents to his praise, and to make all his powers subservient to devotion. The removal of the ark to Jerusalem, gave him an opportunity of exhibiting to his subjects his confidence in God, and of recounting his marvellous works to their ancestors. Of this he availed himself, and amid the joy of this event, sung a hymn to Deity, which he had previously composed for the occasion. He soon wrote many hymns of this character, which, from the great popularity of the monarch, must have been extensively committed, and sung at their festivals and social meetings. Old traditional songs thus supplanted by the muse of David, were soon forgotten, while those of the monarch were universally received. So great was the popularity of these poems, that only one of the old songs was in existence at the time the Psalms were arranged, which the compiler thought worthy of being placed by the side of David's muse. This is a song of Moses, which was retained from its great beauty, as well as out of respect to their great law-giver. A number of poets arose, and followed the track of the king, and by imitating him, made all their poems devotional. They, as well as David, identified their successes with the interposition of Jehovah, dwelt upon his mighty works, and gave to their religion a national character, by displaying to the Israelites their moral elevation above the nations around them, and exhibiting God as the Deity of the nation. By thus giving these poems a national character, their popularity was greatly increased, and a taste for devotional poetry was diffused through Palestine.

III. By introducing variety into their poetry.

Before the time of David the songs of the Hebrews were principally Heroic, or Hymns of thanksgiving. If

other kinds of poetry existed, they were forgotten in the popularity of the sacred Muse of David. The royal poet after he ascended the throne introduced several new species of odes, and gave to his poetry a definiteness of form before unknown. The Hymns in the Book of Psalms, which contains many of the inspirations of his Muse, exhibit a definiteness in their construction, much superior to most of the poems of the Hebrews, but inferior to those of the Greeks and Romans. It is my object at present here to examine the different species of poetry composed by David, and as far as in my power, to arrange them under their respective classes. As the knowledge of Hebrew metre is lost, I shall be guided principally by the circumstances under which, and by the occasion and time when they were composed, as far as I can form an opinion from internal evidence.

First; Exile Songs.

By this term I mean those which were written while banished from the court of Saul, while an exile from Jerusalem during the rebellion of Absalom. These I class together, as they would both exhibit the same deep feeling, and as the thoughts which would arise in the mind of the poet would be similar. Many of these Songs remain, among which the following are from their titles Exile Songs. Not only are they attributed to David, but the subjects and the feeling of deep distress which they exhibit, are so much in unison with David's life and sufferings, that no one will peruse them without attributing them to him. These are the 3d, 18th, 34th, 52d, 54th, 56th, 57th, 59th, 63d, 142d. The 7th in which Cush the Benjamite is named, was written during his exile, or about the time when he fled from the court of Saul as appears from the great distress of the writer, and the dangers which surrounded him. The 4th, 5th, 6th, 11th, 13th, 17th, 23d, 33d, 35th, 41st, 55th, 61st, 62d, 64th, 86th, 140th, 141st, and 143d are at-

tributed to David in the Hebrew, though not all of them in our version. They bear internal evidence of having been written under great distress, or of joy attendant upon deliverance. Many of them are replete with tenderness of feeling, especially those written at a time when the snares of death were spread in his path. Others exhibit a strong confidence in God. Relying upon his innocence, he believes that his Almighty Shepherd will again come to his deliverance, and conduct him to verdant pastures, and to streams that gently flow ; that under his protection he will be able to rise superior to all his trials, and escape all the dangers which are thickening around him ; that resting on the staff of the Almighty he will never fear, for he who has watched over him and been his buckler and fortress, will again interpose, deliver him from all his afflictions, and make his cup of happiness to overflow. The 23d Psalm which was written during his flight from Absalom, and as appears from the 6th verse about the time when Barzillai and his two friends met David, and spread a table for him and his troops in sight of the enemies of David, is a most beautiful example of unbounded confidence in God, and when received in connection with the circumstances under which it was composed, is almost unrivalled for beauty of imagery and tenderness of feeling. Others were composed just after danger had threatened him, and exhibit a heart overflowing with joy and gratitude to God who had interposed in his behalf. The 69th bears the title of David. If he was not the author it was probably written about the time of the Babylonish captivity, as in the 36th* verse evident allusion is made to the cities of

* In referring to the verse in this essay, I have used Jahn's Hebrew Bible. This author usually makes the title of the Psalm the first verse, especially when it is long. As this is not done in our version, the English reader will in such instances find the reference in the preceding verse of the translation.

Judah which had been destroyed. The Poet confiding in God, consoles himself in his afflictions with the belief, that God would again repair the desolations of Zion, and build the holy city.

Secondly; Prophetic Songs.

Of this species only a small number belong to David. Probably few were written by him which the Israelites would not have been desirous of preserving. The 2d Psalm belongs to this class. It is without a title, but was written by David, to whom it is ascribed in Acts iv, 25. As the language used by the Apostle is, *who by the mouth of thy servant David hath said*, we must view this as a direct assertion that he was the Author, and not by way of accommodation. The 16th Psalm is prophetic, referring to our Savior. This Psalm is quoted by Peter, Acts, ii, 25, where the Apostle refers to David, and quoting the four last verses says, *that David spoke this concerning him*. In Acts xiii, 35, 37, this Psalm is quoted by Paul, who applies the 10th verse to our Saviour. The 22d Psalm, which is attributed to David, is certainly prophetic. The 2d, 7th, 8th, 9th and 19th verses of this Psalm refer to the Crucifixion of Christ. The language is so descriptive of that scene, that no one who believes in prophecy, can doubt for a moment, when he compares the language of the Evangelists with this Psalm. The 110th Psalm refers to the conquests of our Saviour, in his Mediatorial Kingdom. As this Psalm has been analysed with great ingenuity, by a writer in the Christian Spectator, I refer the reader to that analysis, which is as satisfactory as it is ingenious. Several other Psalms are thought to be more or less Prophetic, but some of these may be explained by a reference to the circumstances of the writer.

Thirdly; Hymns to the Deity.

It has been the custom of all nations, to compose hymns in praise of the Deities, who watched over their nation. The Greek and Roman poets, at an early period of their litera-

ture, composed hymns in honor of their gods. In these they celebrated their birth, and the most memorable actions of their lives. The hymns of Homer, of Calimachus, of Theocrites and Ovid, are of this character. The hymns of the Hebrews, which were written in praise of Jehovah, are in many respects very similar to those of the Greeks and Romans. They are however greatly superior to them, as they wrote with a knowledge of the true God, while the heathen poets depended on tradition, to furnish them with materials to adorn the characters of their Deities. They lived in a country as poetical in its scenery, and by the light which Revelation had shed upon their land, and through the medium of the miracles, which God had wrought for their nation, they were enabled to form some idea of the Divine existence. The gods of the heathen were nothing but men, whose exploits had been magnified by tradition, until they possessed a power that was super-human. The Deity of the Hebrews was Omnipotent. He dwelt in light inaccessible and full of glory. Every object which existed came into being at his word, while the heavens above, and the earth beneath, reflected his glory. The conceptions, which the Greeks formed of their Deities, were distinct, and reduced to form. Their passions, and the motives by which they were influenced, were all understood, while they differed from men, only as they surpassed them in power, or in the celerity of their motions. The views of the Hebrews, when directed to God were abstract, they were lost in the vastness and obscurity that surrounded him. All inanimate nature, as well as all intelligence, became subservient to his will, and when he moved, the heavens, the earth, and all creation trembled before him. As if conscious that no eye could see him, and live, they invest him with the obscurity of clouds and darkness, make his Pavilion thick waters and dark clouds,

while at the breath of his anger, the earth is enkindled, and the nations, who have forsaken him, are consumed by his indignation. Among the Hymns of this class, is the 8th, where after having viewed Deity through the medium of creation, the Royal Poet draws a contrast between that Being who adorned vacuity with "piles of crystal light," and himself belonging to the lowest order of intelligences. The first eight verses of the 19th psalm, are a hymn of the same character, where he praises God through the works of his hands. The first half of the 18th psalm belongs to the same class of compositions. The imagery of this hymn is derived either from the descent of the Deity on Mount Sinai, as Lowth supposes, or from the violent tempests which, accompanied by thunder and lightning, so often descend from the mountains, into the valleys of Palestine. The images succeed each other in a manner so similar to the tempest, that I am convinced that David has here derived them from the storm, which he must have often witnessed while feeding the flocks of his father, in his boyhood. No representation of the Deity, unless the celebrated ode of Habbakuk, in the magnificence of its imagery, equals this sublime hymn. In the 29th psalm which is an ode of the same character, he describes the power of God, as seen in the lightning and thunder, and the raging of the storm. The 65th, 108th, and 139th psalms are of the same class, and are replete with beauty and with sublime views of the Deity, vastly more elevated than can be found in the whole compass of Heathen poetry.

Fourthly, hallelujah hymns.

These either begin or end with *praise ye Jah*. Some of them both commence and terminate in this manner. These hymns are addressed to the Deity, and belong to the last class. I have placed them under a distinct head, from this peculiarity in their beginning and conclusion. None of these are attributed

to David, and being without titles, the reader is left to form his opinion from internal evidence, and from the history of the Hebrews. As they were written expressly for religious worship, and as the instruments, which were to be used while these odes were sung, are frequently mentioned, it is probable that David composed most of them. Those, which in the Hebrew belong to this class are the 106th, 111th and 112th, which commence with *praise ye Jah*. The 104th, 105th, 115th, 116th, and 117th terminate in this manner. The 113th, 135th, 146th, 147th, 148th, 149th, and 150th both commence and end with these words. The Alexandrian version adds several to this class, viz: the 107th, 114th, 118th, 119th, and 136th. The LXX may have added this title, if I may call it such, or the manuscript from which they translated differed from that now used.

Fifthly, acrostic poems.

By this I mean those Psalms where the first verse commences with Aleph, and each verse which succeeds it, with the subsequent letter of the Alphabet. These as Lowth says "were evidently intended to assist the memory; and were confined to those compositions which consisted of detached maxims or sentiments, without any order or connection." Of this class there are seven Psalms, the 25th, 34th, 37th, 111th, 112th, 119th, 145th, of which the three first and the last, are attributed to David. The 119th differs from the others, the first eight verses commencing with Aleph, and each following eight verses with the succeeding letters of the alphabet. As the poet was compelled to write in a manner so artificial, there was little room for the exercise of his imagination. Accordingly we find that they are inferior to most of the Psalms in sublimity and beauty. The elegies of Jeremiah, with the exception of the last chapter, are acrostic. When we remember that his mind was thus fettered, we cannot peruse them

without being astonished at the deep tone of feeling which these poems exhibit. This species of poetry according to Lowth, is said still to exist among the Syrians, Persians, and Arabians.

Sixthly. Hymns sung at the removal of the ark.

Of this class there are several still remaining. In I Chron. xvi, chap. is a song which David composed at the time when he first removed the ark to Jerusalem. The ark was placed in the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of the Hebrews, and contained the two tables of stone, on which were inscribed the ten commandments. The wings of the Cherubim which were spread over the ark, formed the throne of the Deity. Here God was believed to dwell and to diffuse protection to his people. This was, above all other places of the tabernacle, the most holy. The ark on this account was considered as a fortress and defence,* and every thing connected with it was viewed by the Hebrews with intense interest. So important was its removal in the eyes of David, that he assembled thirty thousand men to witness the ceremony, and afterwards when it was brought to Jerusalem, *all the house of Israel* accompanied him with music and dancing. David did not permit this opportunity to pass, without consecrating his poetic talent to Jehovah. He composed a song which he delivered to Asaph and his brethren, to be sung in honor of God. This psalm from the 23d verse, was afterwards introduced into the book of Psalms.† There are several other poems which he composed for the annual celebration of this event, or else wrote them on its subsequent removal to some other part of the city. In Numbers x, 35, we are informed that whenever the ark was removed, Moses said, *Rise up Lord and let thine enemies be scattered. and let all that hate thee flee before thee.*

* I Sam. iv, 3.

† See 96th Psalm.

As the 58th Psalm commences in this manner, it is certain that this poem belongs to this class of hymns, but at what time it was written it is impossible to determine. It belongs to that species of poems which I have called hymns to the Deity, and for beauty of thought and elegance of language is seldom equalled by the Hebrew poets. The 24th also is of the same character, but differing from those to which I have just alluded, as it was performed by alternate choirs of musicians. It was sung as the ark approached the gates of Jerusalem, to which there is direct reference in the words. *Lift up your heads O! ye gates.* As Jehovah was believed to sit on the throne over the Ark, we discover the force and beauty of the allusion to him in the words, *and the king of glory shall come in.* Several other Psalms are supposed to refer to the Ark, but as I shall have to depend upon conjecture in thus arranging them, I will omit an examination of them.

Seventhly, Didactic Poems.

The clenastic Psalms belong to this class, though they are much less didactic than the Proverbs of Solomon. This species of poetical composition, has existed at an early period among most of the nations of antiquity. They are usually short, pithy sentences, derived from experience, and thrown into a poetic form. The knowledge of the wise men of antiquity was thrown into these short sentences, and handed down by tradition through successive generations. The oldest specimens of didactic poetry, which remain, are found in the book of Job. In the eighth chapter and eighth verse, Bildad directs Job to inquire of the former age, and search into the wisdom of antiquity. He then repeats the proverbs of the ancients, to add to the weight of his reasoning. Job in the twelfth chapter, meets his argument by quoting from the wisdom of their fathers. Several instances occur in the life of Sampson, as related in the book of Judges, xiv.

chap. 14th and 18th verses. In the first of Samuel, the latter part of the 22d and the beginning of the 23d verses of the xv. chap. (which are certainly poetical from the Parallelism, and the only specimens of Samuel's muse, which remain,) are didactic. In first Sam. 24, 13, David quoting the ancients in his address to Saul, has preserved another of these proverbs, founded on the experience of ages. Our own language abounds with many thousands of them. The plays of Shakspeare, and the dramatic writers of the reign of the first James, are replete with this species of practical wisdom, as well as the conversation of every circle.* Specimens of this kind of poetry, are not very numerous in the writings of David, as every thing which came from his mind, received a colouring from his intense feelings, and from his active imagination. Instances, however, occur scattered through the Psalms. The 94th which the lxx attribute to David, is principally didactic. The 9th verse is quoted Proverbs 20, 21, where it is thrown into a more concise form. Several of the Psalms exhibit either wholly or partially, the didactic form, which the reader will easily discover.

Eighth, Elegiac Poems.

Of this class many remain, but as some of them are merely elegiac as it respects their subjects, the reader must depend upon his own taste in classifying them. The elegy over Saul and Jonathan, is unequalled for beauty and tenderness, but as I have recently examined that poem, I will not dwell upon it in this place. The elegy which David sung at the grave of Abner, is a beautiful, though concise tribute to the valor of that distinguished officer. The poet commences with the enquiry. "*Did Abner die like a vile and worthless fellow?*" then changing the person, he addresses him, and referring to his past achievements, eulogizes his valor, by

* In Swift's "Polite Conversation," the reader will find several thousand of these which were current in London in his time.

dwelling on the fruitless attempts of the enemy to arrest the progress of his arm. As the Hebrews esteemed death in the hour of victory most honourable to the warrior, for fear that injustice should be done to the courage of this brave officer, the poet again recurs to his death, which was the result of base treachery instead of cowardice. The 42d and 43d psalm which I have before observed, constitute one poem, exhibit a most finished specimen of this class of compositions. The title attributes it to the sons of Korah, and it may possibly have been written by some one of those poets, though the situation of the writer as appears from internal evidence, is so similar to that of David when he fled from Absalom to Mahanaim, that I am inclined to believe that there is some mistake in the title of the Hebrew manuscript, or that the author must have accompanied David in his exile. The allusion to Mount Hermon, and the cataracts which fell down the northern mountains of Palestine, are thoughts which would naturally arise in the mind of a poet placed as David was in the vicinity of these objects. In the chorus, notwithstanding he is now banished from mount Zion, he exhibits that strong confidence in God, which is characteristic of David's poetry. The allusion to the Ark, and joy attendant upon its removal, and also to his enemies who rejoicing in his distress, cry unto him, where is now that God who has so often interposed in your behalf, are in unison with the thoughts which would then arise in the mind of David. The deep feeling which he exhibits is so similar to that of the Royal Poet in his songs of exile, and the spirit which it breathes is so much like David's, that I cannot deny his claim as the author of this most exquisite piece of composition.

Ninth, Idyllia or Historical Poems.

Of this species a number are found in the book of Psalms. They are all of them without titles, and the reader is necessitated to form his opinion of

their authors principally from internal evidence. One of them, viz. the 105th, is certainly David's, as the first 18 verses are taken from the 16th chapter of the 1st book of Chronicles, which the 7th verse informs us was written by David. This Hymn commences with an ascription of praise to Deity. The poet then relates in a very concise and beautiful manner, the miracles which God had wrought for their fathers during the patriarchal age, and while they were prisoners in Egypt, until the first born of the Egyptians having fallen before the anger of God, the Israelites leave the land of bondage, and encamp at the Red Sea. The 106 psalm takes up the narrative at the Red Sea, proceeds with them through the wilderness, recounts the wonderful works God had wrought in their pilgrimage, brings them into the promised land, and terminates with the time of the judges *when the Lord gave them into the hand of the heathen.* This psalm is so similar to the last, both as to style and subject, that I cannot hesitate a moment in ascribing it to David. The 107th psalm is an Idyllium, but does not exhibit a continued narration of events. This would have been difficult for the writer to have done without too frequently interrupting the thread of his narrative by the chorus, which occurs at the termination of each division, excepting the last. This psalm may originally have been parts of five poems, but I am inclined to believe that it was composed in this manner for public performance, at some one of their festivals. The first poet describes those who are wandering in the desert. The writer either has reference to the caravans which lose their way in the desert, vide Job 6, 18—20; or to the deliverance which God wrought for their ancestors while in the wilderness. Secondly to those who are in subjection, referring either to the bondage of Egypt, or to the subsequent oppressions which they suffered during the days of the Judges. Thirdly to those who are

afflicted on account of their iniquities. Fourthly, to those exposed to shipwreck during the raging of the tempest. Lastly to the Nomads, who wandering in the wilderness suddenly discover springs of water, where they pitch their tents, and pasture their cattle; or else to the sudden resuscitation of Nature after the east wind had been blowing, and reduced every green herb to the colour of the desert.

This last image is to an inhabitant of the East, one of the most beautiful on which the mind could rest, and any one who is familiar with the withering power of the East wind, which blows from the Arabian Desert, will realize the great beauty of this image as exhibited by Mahomet who compares the almost instantaneous change from barrenness to a vivid green, (as seen after a rain,) to the soul rising from the weakness of this life, to the vigour of immortality. The 136th psalm belongs to this species of poems, but differs from those which have been mentioned, in having the same chorus repeated at the termination of each line. There are a few other Historical Hymns to which I shall refer, when I come to speak of the literati who flourished during the reign of David.

Tenth, *Dramatic Songs*, I call these Dramatic, because they were sung by two or more choirs. This term is applied to the book of Job and Solomon's Songs, by Lowth and other critics, because two or more persons are introduced. This class of poems was evidently written for public worship, and sung by the choirs of musicians alternately, excepting when they both united in the chorus. I have already examined this class in speaking of the music of the Hebrews.

Eleventh, Pilgrimage Songs.

By this term, I mean those songs which the Israelites in making their pilgrimages to Jerusalem at the three great annual festivals, are supposed to have sung while in the city, or when Mount Zion first broke upon

their view. Mount Zion was greatly elevated above the surrounding country, and wherever the Hebrews spoke of going to the Holy city, they say *he went up to Jerusalem*. These are styled in the Hebrew שָׁמְרוּת הַמִּלְאָקֶת, and by the LXX Ωδη τῶν αὐαβαθμῶν, or *songs of ascending or going up*. There are 15 of these poems in the book of Psalms, beginning with the 120th, and ending with the 134th. Four of these in the Hebrew are attributed to David, viz. 122d, 124th, 131st, 133d. The seventy do not designate the authors of any of them. Some of these poems as far as we can form an opinion from their contents, have no allusion to the pilgrimage, or to Mount Zion, from which it is possible there is some mistake in the titles. The 122d psalm is of this class, and was composed to be sung in sight of the Holy City. In the first verse the pilgrims manifest their joy at the return of this festival, and as they draw near they exult in the prospect, that their feet will soon stand within the city of the Most High. In the third, they dwell with delight upon the extent of their metropolis, and as they look around, and see the environs of Jerusalem filled with pilgrims who are approaching the gates, they call upon all around them to unite with them in praying, that peace and prosperity may dwell within their beloved city. As God had chosen it for his dwelling-place, all who felt interested in its welfare, should be prospered. The 133d psalm belongs to the same class. This was probably written by David at the first festival after the eleven tribes united with Judah in acknowledging him as their sovereign, or when they returned to their allegiance soon after the death of Absalom. David was probably sitting in his palace, or may have been looking from the top of it towards evening. As he cast his eyes on the prospect around him, and saw the tribes which had so recently rebelled against him, now not only paying their allegiance, but mingling with

the tribe of Judah, and with each other, in the amusements attendant upon those days which were not holy, his heart is delighted with this prospect of united affection. Under the influence of strong feeling, he breaks out in the beautiful language of the first verse of this psalm.

Behold how pleasant and how lovely,
Is the dwelling of brethren in unity.
Like the holy oil on the head,
Descending on the beard, the beard of
Aaron,
Which descended to the skirts of his mantle.

The holy oil was prepared with great care, and rendered fragrant by mingling spices with it. This was to an Israelite, one of the most beautiful objects of comparison. The allusion to Hermon is equally beautiful to the mind of a Jew. This mountain was a spur of 9000 feet in altitude, which shot off from Anti-libanus, and was the highest peak of Lebanon. On it grew the firs and cedars, which are favorite sources of imagery with the Hebrew poets. In consequence of its great height, it retained its moisture during the hot months, fed as it was by the snows of winter, and the dews of summer, and presented a vivid green when all the vallies were parched with drought. This was true of some of the other summits of the holy land. Zion was a single mountain, but as the plural is here used by David, I suppose he refers to the mountains of Palestine which he here calls Zion, or if he has reference to mount Zion it is to the beauty of that Hill, which was a favorite place with David, and which he may have adorned and rendered peculiarly beautiful by irrigation. The meaning of the Poet then is, that the dwelling of the brethren in unity, is as beautiful as Hermon's verdant summit or the flowery top of Zion, where God commanded the blessing, viz. perpetual life or verdure. There are two other Pilgrimage songs attributed to David. From their con-

tents, I see no reason why they should be considered as belonging to this class, as they have not a remote allusion to the festival, or to the tribes which were assembled. Of the anonymous hymns which bear this title, I do not feel authorized to attribute any of them to David. One of them the 126th, was written after the return from Babylon, by some poet who accompanied Ezra, as in the 4th verse he prays that God would bring back those of his brethren who still remained in captivity.

Twelfth, Songs of Victory.

Of this class only a small number remain, considering the numerous victories which David gained, and the extent of his conquests. As he always ascribed his success to the peculiar favour of God, it is probable that he availed himself of the first moment of leisure after his return to Jerusalem, and poured forth his gratitude in a song of praise. These poems, bear a slight resemblance to the old heroic songs of the former age, which appear at this time to have been supplanted by the muse of David. The 9th Psalm belongs to this class, and also the 144th. None of these poems exhibit that enthusiastic joy, which we should expect to find in a poet of such intense feelings as David, and they are much inferior to the triumphal song of Deborah and Barak. The 60th Psalm hardly belongs to this class. It was probably composed a short time before the battle.

In the last place, Prayers.

Of these several were included in the Book of Psalms. They are filled with confessions of sin, with deep repentance, and with a strong confidence in the mercy of God. The 51st. Psalm composed after the reproof of Nathan the Prophet, is the most striking exhibition of a heart overburthened with a consciousness

of its guilt, and of strong intercession for forgiveness of any prayer within my knowledge. The 141st 142d and 148th Psalms are of the same character, but inferior to the 51st in exhibitions of deep repentance.

CRITO.

For the Christian Spectator.

Mr. Editor,

A solution of the following question in the Christian Spectator would afford gratification to some of its readers :—

Is present holiness in believers as really deserving of future reward, as present sin in unbelievers is of future punishment ? Q. D.

For the Christian Spectator.

*Lines on the Death of Catharine Brown
of the Cherokee Nation.*

Thy mind was wrapt in gloomy night,
No voice of peace, nor ray of light
Had sooth'd thy savage bosom drear;
Nor holy hope, nor grief, nor fear,
Had taught thy thoughts to rest in Heaven.
But He that form'd thy rayless mind,
Did speak from Heaven in mercy kind,
And taught thine unaccustom'd ear,
The sound of truth and peace to hear,
And gave thy soul the light of Heaven.
Then intellectual flowers entwine
Around that sable brow of thine,
And truth and knowledge both imprest
Their own fair signet on thy breast,—
And pointed sure, the way to Heaven!
As some bright star with mildest beams,
Breaks through the gath'ring gloom, and
seems

The harbinger of fairer days ;—
No storms of earth can quench its rays—
It shines along the arch of Heaven;
So thou immur'd in savage night,
At length shone forth with chasten'd
light—
Illum'd awhile the deep'ning gloom,
And cheer'd the path-way to the tomb—
Then rose to live, and shine in Heaven!

H. J.

Review of New Publications.

The Essay on 'the Influence of a Moral Life on our Judgment in Matters of Faith,' to which the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and Church Union in the Diocese of St. David's, adjudged its Premium for 1821. By the Rev. SAMUEL CHARLES WILKS, A. M. *Author of Christian Essays; Signs of Conversion and Unconversion in Ministers; Claims and Duties of the Church, &c. Dedicated by permission to the Lord Bishop of Durham.* London, 1822. pp. 52.

Whatever contributes to the elucidation and understanding of the sacred volume, is, without doubt, of the highest utility to mankind. We only require it to be acknowledged, that this book is "given by inspiration of God," to have it perceived, as by intuition, that the investigation of no other writings, however interesting their nature, is half so important. Now, *two* things we hold to be essential to scriptural interpretation, in the most satisfactory degree, viz., a course of mental discipline, and preparatory studies precisely adapted to such a purpose ; and that which is at least as necessary, purity of heart, or a sincere desire to know and do the will of God. The intellectual and literary qualifications, though variously estimated by mankind, are, in the view of the more discerning class, no doubtful auxiliaries, perhaps we might say, are means indispensable to *entire* success. It is not the province, neither is it in the power, of ignorance, to judge of these qualifications, with correctness. He only who possesses them, can fully appreciate their value. Let their utility, or necessity, therefore, be left for *his* decision. We are far enough from wishing indeed to see the theologian's chair, or the desk of a minister of Jesus occupied by the mere scholar and cri-

tic, with whom subtle controversy, ingenious emendations of the sacred text, or the refinements of verbal criticism, are every thing. We should deprecate as the worst of evils to the Church, a spirit of literary presumption in the investigation of the inspired Volume—a spirit which confiding in its own resources, attempts to establish any doubtful points that it pleases, and hurls defiance at the sober sense and chastened piety, which will not abide by its decisions. On this hallowed ground, we desire to meet with no 'intellectual gladiators,' in hostile attitude, whose contentions may not be less disastrous to each other, than calculated to wound the cause of religion itself. The men who are only erudite, are not destined to be the lights of the Church. Critical acumen is no substitute for personal holiness ; and we are yet to learn from the Bible, that even the most profound knowledge of its words and phrases or the most intimate acquaintance with its Archaeology, can ensure cordial submission to the doctrines which it reveals.

In maintaining the cause of sacred literature we wish to see no such things, though they doubtless occur at times : nor do we seriously believe that it more readily associates with them, than with virtue and piety. 'True prayer has flowed from lips wet with Castalian dew,' and so have the purest and most spiritual exhibitions of the truth, been imparted by men, who have joined to experimental religion, the learning by which the latter has been both aided and adorned. Indeed in days not blessed with supernatural inspiration, these are the ablest interpreters of the sacred Volume. We know of none so likely to enjoy the Holy Spirit, in his sweet and powerful influences, enlightening and purifying the mind, as they who connect with the grace of God which they have received, the

highest exertion of their intellectual natures. The perfection of the human instrument lies in the diligent use and improvement of *all* his faculties : and in the sacred interpreter especially, we delight to see a spirit of devotion, both receiving that aid, and exerting that influence, which are derived from mental discipline and appropriate studies.

That the prospects of our own country, in regard to a knowledge of sound interpretation are brightening, none will doubt. We rejoice that such is the fact, and we cannot but hail it as an era in the history of religion, in the United States. We would wish to take grateful notice of the kindness of divine Providence in this respect, in order to encourage the attention which is now given to biblical studies among us. The theological seminaries in our country, we are persuaded, are aiding this object far more effectually, than could be done in any other way ; and though error, as well as truth, is availing itself of the advantages thence derived, the former will gain nothing by it in the end. We are not permitted to blame the constitution, by which a good thing may be perverted, through human depravity. Our concern should rather be, to give increased efficacy to the means, by which truth, through the divine blessing, may be made to countervail error, and these means are sacred study and learning. Beaten by her own weapons, error will be prostrate indeed. Necessity, if choice were out of the question, requires of the friends of true religion, the pursuit of such a course : and indeed the circumstances of the age in other respects (since a spirit of enquiry, perhaps unprecedented in former times, has gone forth into every department of morals and science,) demand of the ministers of religion, in many places, high literary qualifications, as well to edify intelligent christians, as to confute the cavils of the learned unbeliever. With the standard of ministerial acquirements, the knowledge

of christians in general, is intimately connected. This will increase in proportion as *that* is raised. But as already intimated, in order to the best effect, and the abounding of spirituality, as well as intelligence among private christians, a renewed heart, no less than learning, is important in the scriptural interpreter. With the advance of sacred science, there should be an equal elevation of moral principle. We are particularly anxious, that the necessity of the union of the one with the other, should be deeply felt by the community. Science, we are fully persuaded, would be only mischievous without moral principle ; and as to a discovery of the real truth, would often be little more efficacious, than ignorance itself. Sound biblical learning, and personal holiness being found in concert, the one would afford to the other that aid, which each separately needs. But where we cannot command both qualifications, we hesitate not to say, that the latter must be retained, since it is an absolutely essential guide to correctness of belief. The want of piety would most likely be connected with the inculcation of destructive error, for no maxim in morals, is better established, than that a person will be inclined to believe, and of course to teach, according to his particular interests.

This train of remark not unnaturally leads us to the able Essay, placed at the head of this article, which we have thought fit to present to the notice of our readers. We doubt not that our views of the importance of moral purity, especially, as to a correct interpretation of scripture, will receive, in their opinion, abundant confirmation from the statements of our author, on the general principle of the influence of piety 'on our judgment in matters of faith.' The application of the principle is not intended by the writer, to be made to a professional interpretation in particular ; but the reasoning, of course, is as decisive in regard to such an interpretation, as to that which private

christians form for themselves. The Essay of which we are to give some account, is distinguished as being a prize production; and both the importance of the topic, and the lucid manner of treating it, entitle it to a very respectful notice. The nature of the discussion, it will be perceived, is not accurately indicated by the terms used in stating the thesis, which is 'the Influence of a Moral Life on our Judgment in matters of Faith.' Our author has, with manifest propriety, enlarged the ground of discussion, by considering the influence which the doing of the Divine will, as our Saviour conveys the idea, has on our religious belief. The subject is illustrated by a "series of remarks, bearing on the two following propositions:—First, That unholiness of heart or life has a powerful influence in depraving the judgment in matters of religion, and Secondly, That a humble and conscientious endeavor to 'do the will of God,' is eminently conducive to the progress both of faith and spiritual understanding." The writer, we may here remark, is not unknown in the republic of letters, and in the Christian Church, as the author of several other works of able execution and useful tendency, to some of which also, premiums have been adjudged. But we cannot better gratify our readers, than by presenting several rather copious extracts from the work.

In illustrating the first proposition, the strongly marked case of *professed infidels*, is appropriately introduced. A sentiment by no means uncommon, is yet rendered highly interesting by the easy eloquence, and forcible manner in which it is exhibited.

Among those who have rejected the evidences for the truth of the Gospel, where shall we find an individual who has conscientiously submitted to its allowedly excellent moral restraints? If we except a very few persons, whom literary habits, or a virtuous education, or self-respect, or an ostensible station in society,

or a natural inertness of temperament, or a secret misgiving of conscience, has restrained from the grosser excesses of vicious indulgence, where shall we discover a professed infidel who does not prove by his conduct that his rejection of the Gospel is so closely connected with laxity of principle, or immorality of life, as to furnish the strongest reason to conclude, that the one is the chief cause of the other:—that he has discarded religion precisely because he disrelishes its inhibitions and commands. The mere circumstance of the co-existence of two facts does not indeed necessarily prove their connexion as cause and effect; but where this connexion is frequent and striking, it furnishes a strong *prima facie* presumption; and that presumption is increased we may say to certainty, when, as in the case under consideration, powerful *à priori* reasons may be assigned why that effect ought to follow, which we find in point of fact does actually follow, such and such causes. In the late inundation of irreligious writings, for example, we see infidelity joined in striking and intimate union with a spirit of envy, detraction, sedition, blasphemy, and numerous other things "contrary to sound" (that is, to Christian) "doctrine." And can we doubt that these evil propensities were among the exciting causes of that infidelity: which, in its turn, would naturally give birth to a new progeny of vices? Is it a circumstance peculiar to theology, that what men dislike, they easily persuade themselves to disbelieve? Is it extraordinary that immorality should nurture irreligion? Was it an anomaly in the human mind that certain late conspirators, who could deliberately steel their souls to treason, and combine without remorse to wade to their diabolical purpose through streams of human blood, should profess an obdurate infidelity, and expire even on the scaffold itself, avowing a stern and ferocious enmity to all that good men consider, on irrefragable proofs, to be a revelation from Heaven? Was not all this precisely in character? Would not the contrary have been the more surprising fact? Would it not have been difficult to believe that such extreme wickedness could exist without eventually generating infidelity, even if it had not found infidelity already in being, at hand to assist its efforts, and to blot out the fearful prospect of a future retribution? —pp 4, 7.

It is by no means difficult to shew the bearing, which a vicious or unholly life, has on the production of infidelity. They are natural allies, and tend to beget, and nourish each other. We have long entertained a suspicion of the boasted virtues of infi-

the truth, have the effect of gradually raising the most powerful impediments to a right judgment on these particular points; and this perhaps even where there is no distinct consciousness, in any individual instance, of a wilful opposition to the force of evidence? We see this observation forcibly exemplified in the conduct of warm party men of all sects, ages, and countries. We may also observe, in almost every profession and avocation of life, the prevalence of particular practices, which, to all but the individuals concerned, bear an undeniable character of moral delinquency, but the sinfulness of which the offenders themselves, even though in other respects virtuously inclined, do not perceive, because they have lost, in that particular point, the moral discrimination which is necessary to render the most powerful evidence and suasion effectual to produce conviction and amendment.

And thus it is in the case under consideration; for how is it possible that a dispensation of which the prominent feature is "righteousness and true holiness," should approve itself either to the judgment or the heart of a being whose perceptions are clouded by moral prejudice and the love of sin? For example, the Scriptures every where exhibit to us the excellency of the law of God: but how can this excellency be duly felt by one who regards that law with abhorrence, on account of the restraints which it imposes upon his unbridled appetites? The Scriptures again constantly speak of the happiness of a life of devotion to God: but how can this be admitted by one who places his happiness exclusively in earthly gratifications? The Scriptures declare that "to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace;" but how can this be credited by one whose whole practice proceeds upon quite a contrary estimate? The scriptures speak throughout of sin, in all its modifications, as an evil of enormous magnitude; but to such a person no evil is apparent, except indeed so far as the temporal interests of society are concerned. The Scriptures describe the equity of God in visiting every breach of his laws with the severest infliction of judgment: but to a man in the state of mind we are describing, such a proceeding appears far from equitable; and he even ventures perhaps to think it nothing short of tyranny to inflict punishment for what he calls the "innocent propensities" of the human character. The Scriptures speak of whatever is holy, whatever resembles God, as excellent and lovely; but the individual in question perceives no loveliness in any thing of the kind: on the contrary, he views a life of piety as both morbid and misanthropical; and

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tions would be likely voluntarily, and for no purpose, to devote himself to the study of Handel, or a man singularly averse to mathematical reasoning to the Principia of Newton. It is not therefore derogating from the demonstrable character of the Gospel, to admit, that though its Divine Author *might* doubtless have rendered its evidences irresistible, even to the most careless or hardened opponent, he has seen fit to connect the whole of Revelation with a system of moral discipline, and to render an obedient heart the surest guide to a perception of its character and evidences. In truth, we may fairly contend, that, had the Gospel been a system appealing merely to abstract reasoning, and as susceptible of being correctly estimated by a proud and vicious, as by a humble and dutiful inquirer, it would have lost one of its strongest evidences; namely, its wonderful adaptation to the actual habits of mankind, whose reasonings are almost in every instance strongly affected by their personal character and feelings, and who could never have been induced, without a direct miracle, generally to embrace Christianity, even as a system, had it been presented to them in the aspect which the advocates for abstract reasoning unconnected with moral obedience contend that it ought to have assumed.—But this is a large field into which it is impracticable on the present occasion to enter. Let it suffice to have suggested the topic for the consideration of those who have not duly reflected upon the eminent wisdom displayed in the divinely appointed connexion between Christian faith, Christian knowledge, and Christian obedience; or who may have thought the arguments for the Gospel weakened rather than strengthened by this union of appeal to the heart and the understanding. It may be consoling also to the diffident Christian who perhaps finds his faith sometimes endangered, when he hears of persons of alleged powerful minds and great attainments rejecting the Gospel or any of its essential peculiarities, to reflect that they could never have examined into its claims and character aright; for that, even if they applied their intellect to the investigation, they were deficient in those teachable dispositions, those conscientious efforts to obey the known will of God, and those earnest aspirations for the instructions of his Holy Spirit, which the all-wise Founder of Christianity has rendered absolutely necessary for appreciating its merits; a circumstance quite consistent with our views of the character of God, and in full accordance with the fact of mankind being in a state of spiritual discipline and probation."—pp. 41, 45.

The fact that holiness, or unholi-

dels, and especially of infidelity, as being the source of *any* goodness. Their *creed* cannot be truly said to produce even such virtues as they possess. These are effects extraneous to their system of belief or unbelief, and are rather to be ascribed, as Mr. Wilks with much discrimination enumerates, (though he has occasion to speak only of their negative influence,) to the force of literary habits, a virtuous education, self-respect, an ostensible station in society, a natural inertness of temperament, or a secret misgiving of conscience. The genuine consequences of infidelity are to be looked for, in the great mass of mankind, in whom no peculiarity of situation, or native character is calculated to neutralize, or modify the proper tendency of so revolting a creed. In the higher walks of life, its abominations are not doubtful, though they are in a degree concealed. We are so accustomed to connect certain high mental qualities, or conspicuous stations, with comparative dignity and purity of manners, that we are apt or willing to overlook the iniquity which lies at the bottom. In the splendid intellect, and refined taste of Gibbon, for instance, we think too little of the man of vanity and irreligious trifling, or of the dissolute and seductive festivities, to which his beautiful retreat at Lausanne was devoted. As vice suggests the desirableness of infidelity to soothe the conscience; so infidelity in order to reward her votaries with that which they most love, affords a license for almost every indulgence.

In the following paragraph, in which the author pursues his argument in regard to slighter, and more concealed forms of unbelief, we heartily subscribe to the truth of his sound deductions. We are well assured that pride of intellect in particular, 'is one of the most frequent causes of false judgment in matters of faith.'

It would be easy to proceed to shew still more specifically, both by Scripture and fact, the injurious influence of sinful dispositions and habits in alienating the mind, not only from the love, but also from

the understanding, as well as the belief, of the truth. To these sources may we also usually trace up those less glaring species of infidelity which display themselves in Antinomianism, Socinianism, and kindred heresies. Even where there is no temptation to palliate the enormities of a profligate life, there may be secret sins, sins of a more decorous kind, sins of the heart or sins of the intellect, which may greatly impede the spiritual perceptions, as well as vitiate the spiritual taste. In casting a glance over the names of the most celebrated persons who have enrolled themselves among the abettors of such dangerous principles as have just been alluded to, we shall discover in one a stubborn pertinacity which renders the admission of unwelcome truth into a mind under its influence morally impossible; in another, a hardihood which shrinks at no consequences, even though the declarations of God himself should be disputed and traduced before the bar of human presumption; in a third, a levity; in a fourth, a self-conceit; in a fifth, a petulence; in a sixth, a fearless self-confidence; in a seventh, a proud dictatorial dogmatism:—in all, a mental aversion to Divine Truth, which must inevitably prevent a devout submission to scriptural authority, and the establishment of just and sober conclusions from scriptural premises.

Nor are such dispositions and habits less really culpable in the sight of God than those sins which men of the world look upon with greater abhorrence. *Pride*, in particular, in all its shapes, is one of the most offensive and injurious of evils; and in no form more so than when it wears the semblance of intellectual imperiousness. This species of pride has from the first stages of the Gospel to the present moment been always averse to "the truth as it is in Jesus." The Scribes and Pharisees, confiding in their boasted attainments, and exclaiming "are we blind also?" preferred remaining among those self-sufficient "wise and prudent" to whom the Gospel was hidden, to being numbered among those "babes" in simplicity to whom it pleased God to reveal it. Saint Paul alludes to the same evil disposition of mind, when in writing to the Corinthians, he says, "The preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." A *humble and conscientious use of the powers of the human understanding and of the best aids*

of literature, is indeed eminently serviceable in the cause of truth; for Christianity has nothing to fear from the most rigid scrutiny: but the *misdirection* or *perversion* of the intellect—and no misdirection or perversion is more baneful than that which springs from self-sufficiency—is one of the most frequent causes of false judgment in matters of faith. How often do we find, even in the case of persons who are not vicious in their lives,—nay, who perhaps preserve a respectable decorum of conduct,—that the *heart* is prejudiced against a practical admission of Divine Truth, at least of its more peculiar and mysterious doctrines, on account of the Scriptures not making their appeal to mankind in such a manner as to gratify the pride of the *intellect*. They find themselves required to believe promptly and implicitly upon the strength of a Divine declaration; they are enjoined to admit, without hesitation or scruple, many things that they cannot fully understand; and they are invited, yea, commanded, on pain of eternal condemnation, to embrace exactly the same faith which has been professed by thousands of the most illiterate of mankind;—in common, it is true, with men of the highest order of thought, and the most extensive range of literature; but still a faith which owns no submission to human intellect, and refuses to bow its lofty claims before the tribunal of any created mind, however wide its grasp or exalted its powers. A mind vain of its intellectual superiority, and unsubdued by the grace of God, will not easily be persuaded to submit to this; it will recoil from such an unreserved self-dedication; it will demand something more conciliating to the pride of the human heart; and will venture peremptorily to set down as false, whatever cannot be inferred by the deductions of uninspired reason, or, at least, which, when revealed, cannot be fathomed and fortified by human philosophy.—pp. 8, 13.

The following extract is given, in order to shew the author's ideas, of the effects on our belief, of only those occasional deviations from duty of which christians are known to be the subjects.

Nay, we may go yet farther; for even the sincere Christian himself may too often discover within his own bosom a decisive proof of the powerful effects of unholiness of heart or life in obscuring the spiritual understanding and weakening the faith. No sooner does he relax in his Christian vigilance, no sooner does he become secularized in his temper,—no sooner does he grieve the Holy Spirit by pride, or lukewarmness, or the neglect of prayer, or inattention to any known duty,

or indulgence in any known sin,—than he finds that he cannot realize, as at more devout moments, the sentiments which become his holy profession; he perhaps feels inclined to harbour a secret wish that he may have too strictly construed the self-denying character of the Gospel. His mind begins at times to waver respecting some of its essential truths; and while thus under the influence of temptation, he may even venture for a moment to question its Divine authority. No Christian stands so firmly as not to require to “take heed lest he fall;” and though there may seem to be a very wide interval between incipient sins of the heart, and such a lapsed state of mind and affections as amounts, for the time at least to little short of infidelity; yet upon further reflexion it will be evident that this interval is less wide than at first sight appears, and that in fact there is a *very close connexion* between such a state of the heart as makes it a man's interest that the Gospel, or any of its doctrines, should be false, and the temptation to believe that very possibly they *are* so. At all events, sinful habits or affections, of whatever kind, have such a deadening effect upon the soul, that even where they do not open a direct way to nominal infidelity, they essentially impede the operations of faith, and inevitably cause every Christian grace to wither and decay; so that whether the man become a *speculative* unbeliever or not, he, at least for the time, becomes a *practical* one.—pp. 15, 17.

We subjoin one or two paragraphs in which Mr. Wilks, in part accounts for the fact which he had previously established, with the remark that his reasoning is equally candid and satisfactory.

We constantly perceive, in ordinary life, and on points quite unconnected with theology, the powerful influence of particular habits in producing an inaptitude for the perception of truth on subjects which, to all but the parties thus prepossessed, appear sufficiently plain. The arguments which would fully convince an unprejudiced person of the criminality of importing or vending illicit articles of merchandise, would have no effect upon the mind of a practiced smuggler. The most elaborate dissertation upon the atrocity of a piratical life, would be lost upon the callous perceptions of an Algerine corsair. And without adverting to such extreme cases, do we not perceive in the daily occurrences of civilized society, that a familiarity with certain practices, and the frequently recurring, though scarcely noticed, temptations arising from them to shut the eyes and harden the heart against

the truth, have the effect of gradually raising the most powerful impediments to a right judgment on these particular points; and this perhaps even where there is no distinct consciousness, in any individual instance, of a wilful opposition to the force of evidence? We see this observation forcibly exemplified in the conduct of warm party men of all sects, ages, and countries. We may also observe, in almost every profession and avocation of life, the prevalence of particular practices, which, to all but the individuals concerned, bear an undeniable character of moral delinquency, but the sinfulness of which the offenders themselves, even though in other respects virtuously inclined, do not perceive, because they have lost, in that particular point, the moral discrimination which is necessary to render the most powerful evidence and suasion effectual to produce conviction and amendment.

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The fact that holiness, or unholi-

ness of heart and life influences our judgment in matters of faith, we think is abundantly proved, and accounted for, by our author, in the present work. We are aware that our detached quotations can give the reader, only an inadequate idea of the connection and force of the arguments employed; but this deficiency, we trust, will be supplied by his perusal of the entire pamphlet, opportunities for which may be afforded, by means of an edition already published in this country.

The position laid down by the writer being admitted to be correct, it bears with peculiar force, as already hinted, upon the professed interpreter of the Sacred volume. It affords him, in his interesting researches, a rule both of large extent and definite application. He must follow it, in order to be able to convey the exact sense of the Scriptures to the understandings of men, or to make the impressions on their conscience, which these writings are designed to make. There is no surer way of unravelling error, or of obtaining and communicating an adequate knowledge of truth and duty, than that he should be disposed, with all his heart, to do the divine will. If the interpreter of the Bible lives under the dominion of sin, no matter how great may be his biblical love, his judgment, like that of other men, will be apt to be warped by his feelings; and it would be strange if his system of belief should not deviate considerably from the pure and heavenly standard of inspiration. It is only more dangerous to others, and unhappy for himself, that he possesses the means of giving to his false deduction, the aspect of consistency. Our readers have doubtless met with instances in common life, in which men have been notoriously wicked and heretical, who seemed, nevertheless, to have the whole Bible almost at command. In general, the impenitent unholy mind, unless a pious education, and a consequent sense of duty inter-

vene, will be betrayed by a certain laxity of sentiment, and a disposition to complain of severe and unadulterated truth. Inferior literary qualifications attended with a heart right with God, are preferable to the greatest without it; but where extensive biblical learning is joined with exemplary piety in the sacred interpreter, the happiest results may be expected. Accordingly we think, that so far as the public ministrations of the Gospel are concerned, and more especially the communication of mere truth, an evident advance has been made, of late, in evangelical communities. We claim not for the present times, a greater share of native talent, nobler conceptions, deeper thought, or a more commanding eloquence than belonged to our fathers; but we must say that theirs in general, were not the able exegetical views, the compact reasoning, and the straight forward course, which distinguish the best sermons of more modern date. In these, we shall find but little matter foreign to the subject in hand, very unlike the former too common practice of making every sermon a body of divinity, with the endless divisions and subdivisions, and the tiresome digressions which were necessary for such a purpose. The rules of sound interpretation, so far as they are observed, exclude the expedients of ingenious but unsatisfactory theorizing, alike contrary to scripture and true philosophy. They discard all fanciful conjecture, and the employment of weak and inconclusive argument, in order either to unfold, or confirm the truth. In short, they require no more to be stated, than can be proved by reason, or by scripture explained, in its literal or grammatical sense; and their effect is to trim down a sermon, into the neatness, sharp points, and singleness of aim, which such an exhibition ought to have, seasoned with pungent addresses to the conscience, fraught with instruction to the understanding, and increasing in weight and pathos to the end.

A few thoughts we will venture to add, as to the merits of the general sentiment presented in the pamphlet under consideration. The scriptural views, or religious opinions of holy persons are, no doubt, valuable. They know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or otherwise. Their judgment in matters of faith must be essentially correct, else it would be difficult to account for their possession of holiness, and for the peculiar advantage of divine revelation. The truth by which we are sanctified, must be more or less clearly perceived by those, who are formed under its influence. On the fundamental points and great outlines of the christian system, they are actually found to be agreed in *heart*. They are all cast substantially into the same mould. They all receive from the word, and the Spirit of God, one certain characteristic impression, which may appropriately be called a family likeness. A seal always makes one and the same stamp, varying only according to the greater or less degree of success in the application. In some instances, it must be acknowledged, the impression of holiness is not very marked and distinct in the christian convert. Still, in every case, it is a reality—a result which never takes place in those who continue to be inimical to God, and his truth. So far as we can judge of men by their temper and conduct, the victims of heresy give too decisive a proof of practical unholiness. There is in them, some palpable moral delinquency, some essential deficiency of the christian spirit, some suspicious harboring of evil intentions, some disaffection towards the divine government, plainly enough to be seen, though often attempted to be masked under specious professions. If we may credit the records of ecclesiastical history, there is in the heretical character, something which opposes itself especially to the principles of self-denial, inculcated in the Gospel; for while the true believer felt it his duty to adhere to Christ, at the expense of

life itself, the heretic was wont to plead the right of exemption, from so fearful a trial of his constancy.

The pamphlet which has occasioned these remarks, and of which we have given several specimens above, is a finished little production, written in a graceful and perspicuous style, containing many just views of truth on the topics discussed, enriched with choice illustration, enforced by a simple, yet manly eloquence, and the whole recommended by a winning spirit of piety. The good sense, and good taste of the author, have preserved him from the too common attempt to divert the well-begun seriousness of readers, produced by their entering upon a solemn subject, into excessive and misplaced admiration of the *vehicle* of thought. There are even few of those brilliant points and thrilling representations which genius loves, perhaps too well, to scatter through her periods, and of which doubtless our author is highly capable, but which the sober and didactic nature of his theme, in a great measure, forbade. In short, it is a good specimen of temperate discussion, in the middle regions of theology, not materially unlike to the models, in point of sentiment, which we, in New-England, are accustomed to admire. The consistent descendants of the pilgrims, certainly, would not object to the discussion, had it possessed a more rousing character and spoken in deeper tones of terror to the wicked. The intended effect of able representations on the subject of religion, is often weakened by failing in pungency of idiom, and in a prominent and unbending statement of the truth. The little that could be added in these respects, to the present production, shows that no work of man can be absolutely perfect, at least in the view of every one. For our own part, we consider the work as calculated to gratify christians less, in their moments of intensest religious emotion, or most elevated spiritual views, than in the ordinary state of pious feeling, when they possess

"The soul's *calm* sunshine, and the heart-felt joy."

On whatever points the author might differ with us, where christians may innocently differ, of *this* we are assured, that he has guarded the general interests of holiness, with an intentional strictness—he breathes the spirit of meekness and heavenly wis-

dom—he shows a desirable acquaintance with religious experience—and, to express our approbation of his performance in one word, we should be glad frequently to receive, from him and his brethren, productions so well calculated to confirm and promote our faith.

Literary and Philosophical Intelligence.

The publisher of the Hebrew and English Lexicon, by Mr. Gibbs, states that it will be ready for subscribers by the first of January.

Proposals have been issued for publishing by subscription, a *History of the Indian Wars in the country bordering on Connecticut River.* By E. Hoyt Esq. of Deerfield, Mass.

A Prospectus of a new Periodical Work, to be entitled The American Monthly Magazine, has appeared in Philadelphia. It is to be printed on fine paper, with a new and handsome type, and to contain from 90 to 100 pages: every third number to be embellished with an engraving. \$6 per ann.

The Prudential Committee of the Corporation of Yale College have determined to erect, during the next summer, a new Chapel, the present one being too small to accommodate the increased number of Students. It will occupy the space between the two northern College buildings.

In the Press, *High ways and By-ways; or Tales of the Road-Side,* picked up in the French Provinces. By a Walking Gentleman. From the second London Edition. Philadelphia; Cary & Lea.

The Trustees of Columbia College, N. Y. have established a new Professorship of Law, and appointed the Hon. James Kent, LL. D. late Chancellor of the State, to fill the chair. He has accepted the appointment.

Christian Almanac.—25000 copies for 1824 were sold by the publishers in Boston, in one month. It is republished in New-York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, Pittsburg, Penn. and Rochester, N. Y.

A Society was formed at Pittsfield, Mass. Sept. 10. under the name of the Lyceum of Natural History of the Berkshire Medical Institution.

Sir Everard Home, who has recently made some experiments upon the auricular organs of quadrupeds, states that "the high notes of the piano forte upon the great lion in Exeter Change, only called his attention, which was considerable, though he remained silent and motionless. But no sooner were the flat, or lower notes sounded, than he sprung up, lashed his tail, and yelled violently, and endeavoured to break loose; and became altogether so furious as to alarm the spectators present. This violent excitement ceased with the discontinuance of the music. The deep tones of the French horn also produced a similar effect with the lower notes of the piano forte, on the elephant and other animals on which the experiment was made."

The number of Cadets in Capt. Partridge's Military Academy was, in August, 128.

Houses for the Insane.—There are 40 private houses near London, for the insane, and two establishments at Hoxton and Bethuel, containing upwards of 1300 patients.

List of New Publications.

The Faith once delivered to the Saints. A Sermon, delivered at Worcester, Mass. Oct. 15th, 1823, at the Ordination of the Rev. Loammi Ives

Hoadley, to the Pastoral Office over the Calvinistic Church and Society in that place. By Lyman Beecher, D. D. 25 cts. Boston, 1823.

The Decision ; or Religion must be all or is nothing. Second American Edition, enlarged. John P. Haven, New-York, 1823.

Letters of Adam Hodgson, Esqr. of Liverpool, Eng. written during a journey through the United States, in the years 1819, 1820, and 1821. 8vo. New-York ; Samuel Whiting.

Utility of Natural History. A Discourse, delivered before the Berkshire Medical Institution, at the organization of the Lyceum of Natural History, in Pittsfield, Mass. Sept. 10, 1823. By Rev. Edward Hitchcock, Pastor of the church in Conway. pp 32, Phineas Allen, Pittsfield.

An easy method of acquiring the reading of Hebrew with vowel points,

according to the ancient practice. By an experienced Teacher, on a sheet of drawing paper ; 37 1-2 cts. The first American from the second London edition. New-York, 1823.

Elements of the Chaldee Language; intended as a Supplement to all the Hebrew Grammars in use, and as a general introduction to the Aramean dialects. By the Rev. William Harris LL D. Professor of Hebrew at Hoxton Academy, England. First American edition ; 75 cts. New-York, 1823.

A Flora of North America, illustrated by coloured Figures drawn from Nature. By M. P. C. Barton, M. D. U. S. N. Professor of Botany &c. No. XXXII. Philadelphia, 1823.

Religious Intelligence.

Accessions to the Churches.—It is stated in the Boston Recorder, that during the last year, five Academies, and during the last eighteen months, six Colleges, have been favoured with revivals of religion. Two of the Academies and four of the Colleges were in the Middle and Southern States. It is also stated that within the same period of eighteen months, there have been revivals in three of our cities, viz. Boston, New-York and Charleston, and in more than four hundred congregations, of various denominations. The number of hopeful subjects of grace, in all these revivals, is estimated at more than twenty-seven thousand.

chiefs dined on board the British men of war, and were received with salutes and honours paid to persons of high rank. The progress in civilization and christian feelings made by these islanders is very great, and their rigid execution of the treaty made with their king for the *abolition of the slave trade*, is highly commendable, and reflects no great credit on the Christian nation who have pertinaciously endeavoured to avoid engagements in this particular. Six years ago they were blinded by complete barbarism ; but their eyes have been opened, and they now rejoice and are happy in the blessed idea of having become a civilized nation.

Madagascar.—This extensive and fertile Island of the Indian Ocean, has recently been *wholly converted* to Christianity and civilization, by the Missionaries of the London Association. In June last, the British Governor of the Mauritius, Sir ROBERT FARQUAHAR, visited the islands with two men of war, and was received by the Prince RATARIA and RENE, the principal chiefs at Tamatave, with every token of respect. An exchange of presents took place ; and the black chiefs remarked that silver and gold they had not, but such as they had, they gave freely ; and it was said to be gratifying to see many thousand natives bringing their presents of plantains, yams, cocoa nuts &c. The

Madagascar is eight hundred and forty miles long, and of nearly equal width ; and it is calculated that seven millions of human beings have been heretofore sold from it as slaves to different nations. The soil of the island is excellent, the climate genial ; and large quantities of sugar and silks are annually produced. The people are a mixed race, but are intelligent and good humoured, and murder and theft are now unknown among them. The King, RANDAMA, has an army of 220,000 men, (which may be called militia) and 20,000 of them which are as well disciplined, as any troops in Europe. Two thousand of them were exercised before the British visitors, and fired volleys, the word of com-

mand being given in English. The Governor and his suite, dined with the Prince at Foul Point, and his two wives did the honours of the table much to their satisfaction: and every thing indicated that they wanted only the patronage and attention of the Christian World, to become a wealthy, happy, and commercial nation.—*Bost. Cent.*

Hayti.—The Rev. Mr. Paul, a missionary to Hayti from the Baptist missionary society, of Massachusetts, in a letter dated at Cape Hayti, August 6th says, that he has preached several times to considerable and attentive audiences. He held a monthly concert of prayer, at which about 150 persons attended. He found at Cape Hayti, eight or ten brethren and sisters, with whom he proposed celebrating the Lord's supper, on the succeeding Sabbath. He distributed a number of Bibles, and expected soon to organize a bible society at the Cape, and another at Port-au-Prince.

Bethel Society in Calcutta.—A bethel society has been established in Calcutta, by the missionaries of different denominations. It is patronized by the Governor General who is its President. Divine service is performed by the missionaries in rotation, every Sabbath morning, on board a small vessel which has been purchased and permanently moored for the purpose. The meetings are well attended by the seamen. The captains of all the American ships in port mutually agreed to send their crews regularly to worship on board the Bethel.

The Foreign Mission School at Cornwall, contains thirty four scholars. Of these, sixteen are in communion with the church, eight having lately made a profession of their faith in Christ. We understand that four or five others give evidence of a change of heart, and probably the remaining number are sufficiently enlightened to perceive the folly and the sin of pagan superstitions.—*Religious Intell.*

Rev. Mr. Sabine's church, Boston.—The Congregational Church and Society worshiping in Boylston Hall, with their pastor, the Rev. James Sabine, have applied to the Londonderry Presbytery to be incorporated with

that body. Their request has been granted, and they have been organized accordingly.

The American Education Society was formed in 1815; and received the first year, \$5000; the 2d 7000; the 3d 6000; the 4th 1900; the 5th 9000; the 6th 13000; the 7th 17000; the 8th and last, 16,962: making the total amount of receipt, more than \$92,000. It has assisted 414 Beneficiaries. Fifty eight have been received during the last year. This society originated at a meeting of eight young men in Boston, July 3d, 1815.

Thanksgiving.—In Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New-Hampshire, and Maine, Nov. 20th. In Connecticut, Nov. 27th. In New-York, Dec. 18th. Throughout the Presbyterian Church, Nov. 6th.

DONATIONS TO RELIGIOUS AND CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

The Treasurer of the American Bible Society acknowledges the receipt of \$3,579 49, during the month of October. There have been issued from the Depository during the same month, 3223 Bibles, and 2425 Testaments; value \$3477 52.

The Treasurer of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, acknowledges the receipt of \$4089 39, during the month preceding Oct. 12th.

The Treasurer of the American Education Society acknowledges the receipt of \$680 60, during the month of October.

The Treasurer of the American Tract Society acknowledges the receipt of \$326 77, during the month of October. Of this sum, \$160 44 was given to constitute Life Memberships.

The Treasurer of the United Foreign Missionary Society acknowledges the receipt of \$696,26 in the month of October.

The Treasurer of the American Society for meliorating the condition of the Jews, acknowledges the receipt of \$335,98 in the month of October.

The Treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society of Massachusetts acknowledges the receipt of \$735 from Miss Anna Wyman of Maine.

Ordinations and Installations.

Aug. 9.—At Cambridge, S. C. Mr. JOHN RENNIE, was ordained as an Evangelist, by the Presbytery of South Carolina. Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Cater.

Oct. 3.—Rev. JARED REID, was ordained Pastor over the South Church and Society in Reading, Mass. Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Edwards of Andover.

Oct. 22.—Rev. HORATIO BARDWELL, late Missionary to Bombay, was installed over the Church and Society in Holden, Mass. as Colleague Pastor with Rev. Joseph Avery. Installing prayer by Rev. Dr. Rice of Virginia:

Sermon by Rev. Dr. Woods of Andover.

Nov. 4.—At Middletown, Conn. Messrs. CHARLES J. TODD, ENOCH HUNTINGTON, Jr. ASHBEL STEELE, and EDWARD IVES, were admitted to the order of Deacons, and the Rev. Messrs. RANSOM WARNER and JAMES KEELER, to the order of Priests, by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Brownell. Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Croswell of New-Haven.

At Albany, over the Third Presbyterian Church, Rev. JOSEPH HURLBUT. Sermon by Rev. Mr. Sweetman.

View of Public Affairs.

The Ricarees.—The late unhappy affair with the Ricarees terminated, like all our wars with the Indian tribes, in the devastation of their country, and in the accumulation of fresh odium upon their race and name. There are many reasons why all charges brought against the Indians, should be examined with peculiar scrutiny, before an armed force is sent, with fire and sword to chastise them. Their accusers are often interested and unprincipled persons. They belong in many instances to that class called *hunting men*—men who have cast away the habits of civilized life, and gone into the wilderness, and who have always been represented as too abandoned to brook the restraints of a civilized and christian community. It is, if we may regard the probabilities of the case, or credit the statements of disinterested persons acquainted with the subject—it is the lawless aggressions of such men, that occasion those frequent complaints of '*Indian outrages*,' which are reiterated in all our newspapers, and which are sure to bring destruction upon the offending tribes. It ought to be remembered too, that we have a hereditary prejudice against the Indians, which magnifies their offences, and prepares us to acquiesce in the severi-

ty of their punishment. By a sort of imputation, we associate with every violent act of theirs, a long list of ancient wars and murders, and require at the hands of the present generation, blood shed in other centuries and by other tribes.

We have been led to these reflections by a letter of one of our Indian agents, in which he gives an account of the origin of the quarrel between general Ashley and the Ricarees. We give the following extracts.

" You have no doubt heard much of the late troubles in our Indian country, probably exaggerated, and all of them overwhelming the poor savages with ‘anathemas and curses vile,’ and devoted prayers offered up for their extermination, without one word of enquiry as to the cause of the difficulty; or one hisp of a suspicion that the Whites *may have been* the aggressors? ‘Situated as I am; unbiased by any of those causes, which induce many people to wish to put the poor savages in the wrong, I think I can give you a pretty correct account of the origin of this unhappy dispute. I pass over the many, the very many outrages committed on them, by individuals of our nation—and, that they are many, I appeal to every Indian Agent whom the government has in the

country ; and come to the case under review, merely stopping to state one little fact which I have from Major ——, Indian Agent in our vicinity. Two Indians had, as is believed, been basely murdered by whites, while protecting some cattle that the whites had taken—the evidence necessary, according to our laws; and, on account of the bias in their favour, was not sufficient to indict them for the offence, and they accordingly escaped unpunished.'

After alluding to the other injuries sustained by the Ricarees, the letter proceeds:—

'At an interview that took place some time after, between the Chief and the Agent above named, the Chief put the following questions:—

"My father, how is it that you white men, come and take away our horses with impunity ; the bones of our brothers and our sons lie bleaching before the cabins of the white men, crying to us for vengeance, and we can get no redress—but if any of our bad young men (for we have bad young men as well as you) trespass on you, we never hear the last of it, until every farthing of the loss is paid."

'A party of the Missouri Fur Company ascending the Missouri, were accompanied by, or were in the company of, a party of the Sioux Indians who were at war with the Ricarees,—a few of the former who were at some distance from the Trading House, fell in with some of the latter Indians, and were pursued by them ; when on approaching the trading house or camp, or whatever they please to call the establishment, the Americans fired on the Ricarees, and killed several, the lowest account says two. This I assert without fear of contradiction, is the origin of the affair.'

The Ricarees sought redress of General Ashley, but received a contemptuous, and menacing reply. It was the opinion of one of General A.'s own men, that \$30 or \$40 worth of presents would have healed their irritation and prevented all further difficulty. "But (says the letter,) for resenting an injury done to their tribe, which every nation in the world would have resented, they are to be exterminated—and the principal witnesses against them are men whose object it is, as well as their wish and interest, to

drive them off their lands, to take their game. Let any one who has seen the men that Ashley and the Missouri Fur Company have sent into the country, (I except the leaders,) say whether the Indians ought to be judged and punished on their evidence alone.

No, sir, the Indians are a poor, despised, persecuted race, more sinned against than sinning; and unless another Las Casas be raised up by Heaven for their defence, the time is fast approaching when the place that now knows them will know them no more forever."

The Missouri traders, as if to remove all suspicion of their having been the aggressors, intimate as usual, that the Indians were incited to hostilities by the British traders. If this be true, and it is a pretext not always destitute of probability, since the British traders have the same motives as the Americans, to secure the furs of the Indians to themselves exclusively—if it be true that the character of the Indian, so credulous of the story of his own wrongs, is made the instrument of an unholy, canibal avarice, the fact renders their situation so much the more delicate and critical, and so much the more requires our commiseration and forbearance. In this connexion we cannot forbear to introduce a quotation from the address of David Brown, an amiable young man of the Cherokee nation, to the people of Salem.

"The position in which the natives were placed, especially in the revolutionary war, was not only singular but extremely dangerous. They were surrounded by foreigners in every quarter. For them to be neutral was impossible. They had to fight or die. But let me not be understood that in all cases I justify the natives for their conduct. Far from me to speak in favour of cruelties and depredations committed against the whites. But while I condemn the conduct of some of my ancestors, while my soul revolts from the murder of many innocent and Christian people, a silent indignation arises within me at the impious and savage procedure of Europeans. As things have been in America for three hundred years, better would it have been had the natives never seen even the shadow of a white man."

The Indians are a defenceless and injured race, and whatever may have

been their crimes, their condition claims our sympathy.

Demerara.—The insurrection at Demerara mentioned in our last No. proves to have been extensive and well concerted. Information of the plot was communicated by a slave to his master only a few hours before it was to break out—early enough to apprise the whites of their danger, but too late to save the devoted slaves from incurring the punishment of an actual rising. Great alarm prevailed in the colony; martial law was proclaimed, and every man capable of bearing arms, ordered to enrol himself without delay. The negroes in the mean time commenced their operations, by confining the whites on nearly fifty plantations, and possessing themselves of their arms. Not having time to concentrate their forces, they were met with, in small and partially armed groups, by the military forces of the colony, and in various skirmishes (if they may be called such) suffered a loss of 300 to 500 killed. The insurrection was easily suppressed, and at the last dates, a court martial was finishing the tragedy by furnishing a long list for exemplary execution.

Such is the history of slavery—a series of insurrections crushed and punished by the violent arm of power; and it needs not the spirit of prophecy to predict that such will be its fearful history till the master shall groan under its pressure as feelingly, and pray for its removal as earnestly, as the slave. Feeble as the efforts of the slaves are, and must be for a long time to come, they are not without effect. They force the subject of slavery upon the unwilling attention of its supporters; they powerfully tend to excite attention and strengthen the desire of freedom among the slaves themselves; and

they hasten on a crisis which all thinking men anticipate, and anticipate with a kind of vague, but intense solicitude that knows not whether it should deprecate or pray for its advancement.

The negroes on the plantations were far more numerous than the whites, averaging more than 200 to a plantation, while the whites were only from three to eight persons. They committed no atrocities. Freedom and not vengeance, seems to have been their object; they wished simply to remove from their necks a galling and oppressive weight which they felt themselves too weary to sustain longer. Two Wesleyan missionaries were arrested on a suspicion of having instigated the slaves to rebellion.

Slave Ships.—The last Quarterly Review states, that in eighteen months ending August last, not fewer than 400 slave ships have departed from the western coast of Africa, carrying away upwards of 100,000 slaves. Nearly one half were French, the other Portuguese vessels.

Freedom in Chili.—By a decree of the Senate of Chili, of the 25th of June, says the National Gazette, every one born since the year 1811, within the territory of the Republic is free—every one who treads the soil of the Republic is free—and all who have heretofore been slaves are absolutely made free from and after passing the decree.

The ministers of the several members of the Holy Alliance in Switzerland, have required of the Swiss governments that they expel all *the political refugees* in their territory, and furnish them with passports only for *the United States of America*, by the way of Bremen or Hamburg. A list of 200 was furnished.—*National Gazette*.

Obituary.

For the Christian Spectator.

The Hon. JOHN TREADWELL was born in Farmington, Conn. Nov. 23, 1745. His parents Ephraim and Mary Treadwell were highly respected for their piety. By them he was early dedicated to God and initiated into the principles of Christianity; was carefully trained to an observance of its institutions and moral precepts, and formed to habits of industry and economy. In his 18th year he entered Yale-College,

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where he was soon distinguished for that sobriety of character, solidity of mind, and firmness of purpose, which characterized his subsequent life. Both in classical learning and the abstruse sciences, and more especially in the latter, he excelled. Having finished his academical course he commenced the study of law in the office of the Hon. Titus Hosmer of Middletown, and continued it till he was pronounced by that distinguished lawyer well qualified for the attorney's oath. His design in

this part of his education, however, had been only to fit himself for usefulness as a private citizen. For professional life he had not supposed himself best qualified, nor did his circumstances seem to require it. He was an only son—the expected heir of a competent estate—and his parents were advanced in years. He therefore never offered himself for examination at the bar, but engaged in various occupations, with occasional reading at home. At the commencement in Yale College he was invited to the office of tutor, which he declined. In November following he was married to a daughter of Mr. Joseph Pomeroy, a branch of an ancient and respectable family of Northampton. It was about three years afterwards and by means of the sudden death of an engaging daughter, his first, and at that time, his only child, that he was led to make a public profession of religion. There is reason to believe, however, that long before this he had become pious. From early youth he had been impressed with a conviction of his natural depravity, and of the truth of the Gospel. During his collegiate years his impressions had become more deep and affecting; and from such records of his life as remain, he appears at this time to have entertained a wavering belief of his having become reconciled to God. But it was not till his 27th year, and then with a trembling heart, under the severe dispensation which has been mentioned, and which, in his view reproved his neglect, that he made a public profession of his faith.

His opinions on all important subjects were remarkably the result of his own deliberations. He was not satisfied merely with knowing the conclusion of other men, nor rash in forming his own; but having established them on what he perceived to be a sure basis, they were uniformly maintained. In this manner were formed his sentiments on the subjects of religion. He had been educated to venerate the Scriptures as the word of God, but he early subjected the question of their divine authority to a rigid enquiry. He had been taught from childhood the doctrines which constituted the main articles of his final belief. But with respect to these it was his settled maxim to call no man father upon earth. Having satisfied himself of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, he critically and patiently studied them with the direct view of discovering the truth. In this manner he became thoroughly convinced of the truth of the system of doctrines called Calvinistic, or the doctrines of grace. In this system he was afterwards further enlightened and confirmed by a careful and extensive reading of the writings of President Edwards and other divines of the day.

At this time his plans of life seem to have embraced nothing beyond those of a private citizen. But, scarcely were his

domestic and economical arrangements completed, when the revolutionary struggle of the American Colonies commenced, and he was called to that career of public service for which Divine Providence had designed and qualified him. He early imbibed the principles of the revolution, and in the autumn of 1776, in the 32d year of his life he was chosen a representative of the town to the General Assembly; and by successive elections, from that time till 1785, he was continually, with the exception of one session, a member of the house. He was then elected one of the assistants; and to this office was annually chosen till 1798, when he was appointed Lieut. Governor. In the autumn of 1809, on the decease of Gov. Trumbull, he was chosen by the legislature to the office of Governor, and by a renewal of the appointment at their session in May, he continued in the discharge of the high duties of that office, the following year. At this time he had been twenty years judge of the court of probate; three years, judge of the county court; twenty years, a judge in the supreme court of errors; and nineteen years one of the fellows of the Corporation of Yale College. The greater part of this time he was also one of the prudential committee of that Corporation, and took a zealous part in the various measures by which the seminary was improved, and has become the distinguishing ornament and glory of the State. Among other public employments, it also deserves a particular mention that he had an early agency in negotiating the sale of the New Connecticut lands, and in constituting from the sale, our school fund. Having in connexion with others accomplished that laborious, difficult and responsible trust, he was appointed one of the board of managers, and in this office was continued till 1810, when, by a different arrangement, it was superceded. He drew the bill for the application of the fund, and is probably to be considered more directly than any other person, the father of that system of education in this state, which has been the subject of extensive admiration, and a principal incitement to several of the other states, in the adoption of a similar provision. In these various offices his reputation was above the reach of calumny. He was never suspected of partiality, duplicity, or a tame serving policy. He was known to act uprightly and with a sincere desire to promote the public good. He was acknowledged to act intelligently as well as uprightly. Probably no man was better acquainted with the internal policy of the State; and having begun his fostering care over it when it was in the cradle of its independent existence, and been almost exclusively devoted to its concerns, in offices so various, and some of them so important, for a period of thirty five years, he contributed to its order and

improvement, in a degree, which, in other periods and circumstances, would have been hardly possible for any man. To him it is especially indebted for the perfecting of its system of laws; and many of its institutions bear, and we trust will long bear, the impression of his forming hand. His name will not stand emblazoned with those of the heroes of the world on the list of fame, but it is written on high with those of the "just" men who have "ruled in the fear of God," and is engraven on the hearts of the wise and the good to whom his light was "as the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds."

But we are yet to view this excellent man in another sphere. In the Church of God, his labours were not the least important. As a member of the church in Farmington, those who have been companions of his course can best appreciate his usefulness. More than twenty years he was a deacon of that church, and while he sustained the highest dignities of the state, he did not decline the ordinary duties of that office; but remarked that "he should be well satisfied with it, could he be conscious that he honoured the office as much as the office honoured him." Of Ecclesiastical Councils, he was a frequent and useful member. Of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, he was one of the original Trustees; of these Trustees he was the first chairman; and this station by successive appointments, he continued to fill, till, on account of advanced years, he declined a re-appointment. He was also one of the Commissioners who formed the Constitution of the American Board for Foreign Missions, and devised the measures for effectuating the important object of their commission. Of that board he was the first president, and in this office he continued till his death which occurred on the 18th of last August. How various were his labors! How extended was his usefulness. To have lived in such a day was a privilege. To have lived in such a manner was grace indeed! In reviewing his course we are naturally reminded of the inspired declaration, "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Public life was no part of his original plan. He had a native self-diffidence, which rendered the prospect of promotion rather unwelcome than pleasing. Though he uniformly found his powers so far equal to the stations assigned him, that he filled them with ease and reputation; yet till the very close of his public action, he preferred a continuance in the offices he held, to the more elevated in prospect. By a series of appointments which he neither sought, nor could have originally expected, he was led "in a path which he knew not."

In the life of this great and good man we are furnished with another example of the success of persevering intellectual ef-

fort. His first attempts at classical learning, were, at least in his own view, rather discouraging than flattering. His perceptions were not quick; his imagination was not brilliant; his memory was not uncommonly retentive. His attainments were rather the result of patient investigation and laborious thought, than of rapid glances and single efforts of mind. But he was ardent and persevering in his pursuit of objects which his judgment approved; he was thorough in his investigation of the subjects which he examined; he frequently reviewed the ground which he had possessed; and thus while the clearness of his conceptions rewarded his toil, they rendered his future acquisitions continually more easy and delightful. Probably the native texture of his mind was more than commonly adapted to clearness of discernment and strength of reasoning, but it was in the manner just described that he early became respectable in classical learning and in legal science. It was by the same habits continued through all his following years, that he acquired his singular power of distinguishing truth and equity amidst the subtleties of deceit and the coverings of wrong. Mathematical science employed a portion of his study through life, he frequently renewed his acquaintance with the classics; and one of the favorite employments of his leisure hours was that of writing on some of the most important truths of revealed religion. In the midst of numerous public engagements he furnished several interesting articles for the religious periodical publications of the day, and in his latter years, principally for his own entertainment and improvement, he wrote a series of Theological essays which are still preserved. It was by such discipline, with no splendid library, and no advantages above what thousands of his contemporaries enjoyed, that his mind was formed, and that, as the result, he united in himself, in a perfection rarely found, the characters of a jurist, a civilian, and a divine.

In the life of Gov. Treadwell, we have also a striking example of the triumph of intellectual and moral greatness over some of the most dreaded obstacles to eminence. He had no superior advantages of birth, of patronage, of personal appearance, or of courtly address. He had no peculiar power of delighting the social circle with the sportiveness of fancy, nor of swaying the public assemblies by eloquence of appeal. In short he was not in the common import of the term, a popular man. He was not formed either in his constitutional mould, or in his habits of life to be popular. But such was his intellectual power and moral worth, that he rose superior to these disadvantages and attained a merited distinction among the eminent and useful men of his day. His life has also furnish-

ed an instructive illustration of the power of evangelical faith to sustain the constancy and peace of the mind in trying vicissitudes. It was to him among the most painful circumstances of that change, in the political habits of the State, by which he was discontinued in the last and highest office with which it had honored him, that, by his previous resignation of his other offices, as being, in public opinion incompatible with this, he was thrown out of the employments with which had been associated the habits of his life. After more than thirty years of public service, he at once found himself in a condition of vacancy as to any single object of a worldly nature to animate his exertions. Besides this distressing circumstance, he experienced a series of bereavements and other domestic afflictions which rarely falls to the lot of any single individual. But throughout these scenes, his fortitude was unshaken, his meekness was scarcely ruffled, and even his usual cheerfulness, was with few interruptions, preserved. Nor could his equanimity be ascribed to a defect of natural sensibility. Nothing could be more false than the impression that he was stoical. His intimate acquaintances were often witnesses of an ardour in his affections, and a susceptibility of feeling, proportioned to the strength of his apprehensions. But they also knew his confidence in God; his adoring views of the divine government; his unfeigned humanity and filial submission.

In the ordinary scenes, as well as on the great occasions of life, his piety shone with steady lustre. His attendance upon divine ordinances was uniform and exemplary. The retired circle for devotion and religious communication, as well as the public assembly, could command his presence, and awaken the strongest feelings of his soul. Familiar as divine truth was to his contemplations, he was always entertained, and often melted, even under the most plain and unadorned exhibition of it. In the intercourse of social and relative life, the same exalted virtue was conspicuous. He could safely appeal to all who knew him, that "in simplicity and godly sincerity, not by fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he had his conversation in the world." They could have no doubt

that his declarations, his professions and his conduct, were the true index of his heart. He sought no disguise, for he was conscious that he needed none.

His closing scene was eminently peaceful. For several of the last years, it had been apparent to his near friends, that he had been fast ripening for glory. His many leisure hours had been almost entirely devoted to spiritual contemplations and exercises, and the interchange of kind affections. He had appeared to have but little relish for any reading except the Scriptures; and his partiality for the New Testament, and in the original language, was retained to the last. His impressions of divine truth had become apparently more deep; his christian sympathies more tender; and his general character adorned with a more soft and engaging lustre. This was particularly manifest in his last illness. Seized with a distressing malady about a week before his death, when his constitution was remarkably unimpaired for his years, he anticipated a painful death. His love of life, and his attachment to his friends, never appeared stronger than then; nor was he ever more serene in prospect of any event, than he now appeared in prospect of death.— Though frequently his bodily pain was great, a by-stander would scarcely suspect it, either from his appearance, or, unless he was directly questioned concerning it, from his conversation. The foundation of his hope was sufficiently expressed in the declaration, "Had I not a better righteousness than my own, I must fall,"—and his prevalent state of feeling, in this, "I hope I can say, the will of the Lord be done,"— and, after a short pause, "I think I can say from the bottom of my heart, the will of the Lord be done." And at another time, "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." God was his refuge. The will of God was the consolation, the solace, the end of his life; and the same will was the centre to which his thoughts and feelings inclined in death. And now, with more exulting joy, and loftier strains, we doubt not, he repeats the ascriptions, "Thine, O Lord, is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

P.

Answers to Correspondents.

C.; H. S. W.; and three communications from H. T., have been received.



Errata.—Page 544, col. 1, line 45, for *desire* read *derive*; p. 546, c. 1, l. 35, before *excepting*, insert *and*; p. 546, c. 1, l. 37, convert the *semi-colon* into a *comma*; p. 646, c. 2, l. 29, for *clenastic* read *Acrostic*; p. 598, c. 1, l. 11, for *emotion* read *commotion*; p. 596, c. 2, l. 11, for *element* read *clamant*.

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THE
CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR
FOR
1824.

THE object of the Christian Spectator, as stated in a former Prospectus, is, "to command by its talent and literary merit, the respect and attention of intelligent readers in all parts of our country; to animate and instruct christians by experimental and practical exhibitions of the doctrines of grace, and to present its readers with a luminous epitome of Literary and Religious Intelligence."

How far this object has been accomplished, our readers will judge. It is not our design now to speak of the merits of the Christian Spectator. We will only say that its friends have been gratified to see it constantly enlarging the sphere of its usefulness, and steadily advancing its reputation, both in our own country and in Europe; that the pens of able and pious men are pledged for its support; and that gentlemen at a distance, along with their voluntary communications for its pages, have sent us the assurances of their cordial approbation of the work.

To those who have watched the prevailing taste and habits of the age, the utility of such a work as the Christian Spectator has been at no period, more apparent than at the present. While they have rejoiced to see numerous publications springing up to diffuse religious intelligence through every part of our country, they have also been concerned to notice an increasing thirst for *news*, and a general habit of loose, desultory reading, calculated to cherish a kind of superficial piety, and to create a distaste for those deep, practical subjects, which are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

But these are not the views with which we wish *chiefly* to impress our readers, and the friends of truth generally. Unhappily, we have a stronger argument—a higher claim upon their patronage. The present age is not more remarkable for the multitude of its religious periodical works, than for another class of publications which have risen up to disseminate error. In proportion as the followers of the Re-

deemer have, recently, been awakened to the great subject of spreading abroad his gospel, its declared enemies and its insidious friends have been excited to an effort, equally vigorous, systematic, and constant, to assail it in all its fundamental and peculiar doctrines. And while newspapers, and pamphlets of a humbler class, which by monstrous caricatures labelled with the names of great and good men—names remembered only with the Reformation—while these are scattered with a gratuitous hand, at the doors of cottages, by the way side, and in the bar-room, to mislead the ignorant, the fountains of learning have been poisoned, and the vague and unsettled doctrines of philosophy, “falsely so called,” are going forth with the all-pervading spirit of literature, among the higher classes of the community, to produce their baleful effects wherever the refinements of education and taste have opened a door for their reception.

We know indeed that God will accomplish his own purposes; that his truth is great and will prevail. But in the system of *means* through which this result is to be expected, we cannot but regard such a work as the *Christian Spectator*, as occupying a highly important place. Of the great mass of our religious publications the object is simply *to diffuse intelligence*. In this way they do the church an excellent service; but *they oppose no effectual barrier to its enemies*; they are neither calculated nor intended to avert the shafts with which our faith is assailed from every quarter.

There is one other consideration which we wish particularly to urge upon the public notice. The ablest magazines which have been undertaken in our country have had no permanency. After being supported for a time, with laudable efforts and great sacrifices on the part of their conductors, they have successively languished and disappeared—not because there is no demand for such publications, but because it is the unhappy characteristic of our country to *divide* its patronage among a multiplicity of similar undertakings. Is not the remark applicable, not merely to periodical works, but to almost all objects of public utility, that they have been supported, if supported at all, by local partialities and a love of novelty, rather than by anything like a concentration of *national* feeling and national patronage.

The advantage of a single publication which shall enjoy a *general circulation*, over others of a limited sphere, however numerous or well conducted, is hardly to be estimated. In this, as in every other case, the influence of numbers im-

parts a character and a stability to the object which it can derive from no other source. Able writers love to contribute to the pages of such a work ; and the consideration that their communications will be read by thousands, calls forth their highest efforts.

In fine, diverting our minds as much as possible from all views of a private or local nature, and looking only at the peculiarities of the age and country in which we live, we do think that some *one* publication, which shall unite the talents and the patronage of all who revere the great doctrines of the Bible, and which shall, by its deep christian spirit, by its judicious and able exhibitions of divine truth, and by its literary merit, command the attention of intelligent readers in all parts of our country, is in the highest degree desirable, not to say imperiously demanded, by the exigencies of the American church.

The Christian Spectator has now been before the public five years. It has been supported, not without sacrifices, till it has acquired a reputation and a patronage which promise to give it permanency. It has been our aim to render it, as far as could be done, acceptable and useful to *all classes of readers*. We feel it our duty in a particular manner, to solicit the aid of Christian Ministers in promoting its circulation ; and viewing as we do the important connexion between the extent of its circulation and *the degree of its usefulness*, we cannot forbear to recommend it to general patronage.

To such as have not been familiar with the pages of the Christian Spectator, we present the following specification of its

CONTENTS.

- I. Religious Communications.
- II. Miscellaneous Communications.
- III. Reviews and brief notices of New Publications.
- IV. Literary and Philosophical Intelligence.
- V. List of New Publications.
- VI. Religious Intelligence,—giving as far as practicable condensed views of all the benevolent operations of the day. This department it is hoped may not only be interesting to the monthly reader, but valuable hereafter as a record of events.
- VII. Donations to Benevolent Institutions.
- VIII. Ordinations and Installations.
- IX. View of Public Affairs.
- X. Obituary Notices.

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